FEBRUARY 25, 2002

REQUIEM FOR A CENTRAL AMERICAN HERO Paul Berman

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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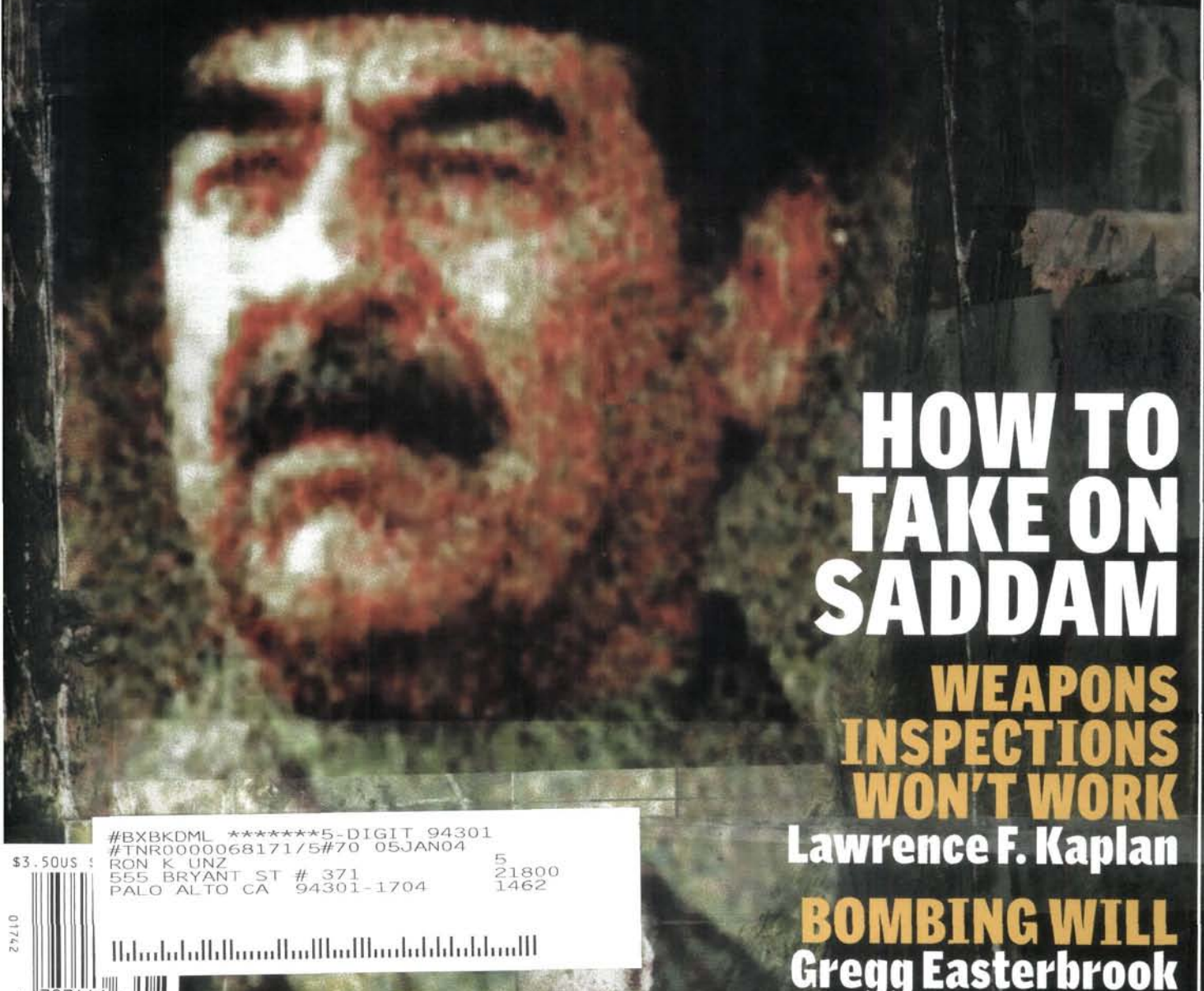

HOW TO TAKE ON SADDAM

WEAPONS INSPECTIONS WON'T WORK
Lawrence F. Kaplan

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Gregg Easterbrook

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CORRESPONDENCE

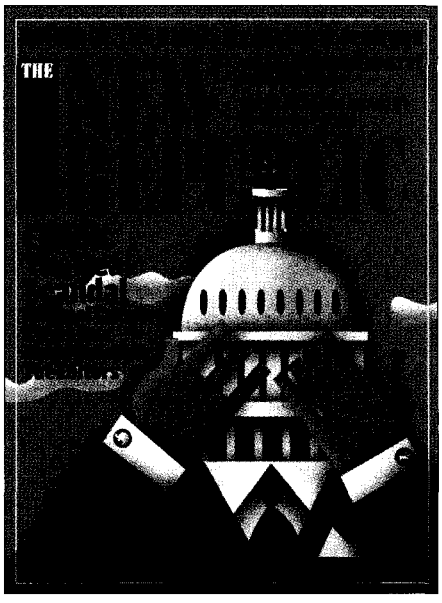
United front

TO THE EDITORS:

In his January 28 article, "After the Fall," THE NEW REPUBLIC's Lawrence F. Kaplan impugns virtually every Washington official save the president for not agreeing that we must quickly remove Saddam Hussein. Leave aside the obvious point that most Americans agree we must not get distracted from the unfinished business of bringing to justice Osama bin Laden and Mullah Omar and destroying Al Qaeda and the Taliban. But Kaplan also elects to ignore the unmistakable fact that there already exists broad and deep consensus that Saddam must go. The only question is how and when to accomplish that goal effectively. When Kaplan quotes me as saying that action against Saddam would be a mistake, surely he knows better, as the text of my remarks to the Council on Foreign Relations is available to all. What he willfully leaves out was my expressed view, in the very same sentence, that it would be a mistake only "in the near term," because we first must lay the groundwork for any military action against Iraq.

I have argued forcefully for employing "smart sanctions" to tighten the vise on Saddam, with the added benefit that such a policy will help us take advantage of post-9/11 opportunities to construct as broad a coalition as possible to topple his regime. With the support of the international community, including the states in the region most threatened by Saddam's brazen behavior, we can generate the consensus either for multilateral action or our own military assault. While there are those who believe we can oust Saddam on the cheap by relying largely on disparate opposition forces with minimal U.S. involvement, I believe there remain too many variables out of our control in this scenario. On the other hand, according to the plans advocated by many current and former senior military officers, including retired Marine Corps General Anthony Zinni, former commander-in-chief of U.S. Central Command, the model for action against Saddam that holds the greatest promise of success is one that allows us to move on our time, at our calling, and plays to our strengths.

The combination of steadily building both diplomatic and military strength is not unlike the approach President Bush undertook before moving against Al Qaeda and the Taliban. Does Kaplan think the president and those of us who have supported his effort were wrong? This is not a debate between Democrats and



Republicans. It's a debate within the current administration and among those of us who know that Saddam and U.S interests are incompatible. But until the fateful decision on Iraq is made to send American troops into harm's way, we will not be deterred by those who resort to personal, partisan, and ideological attacks.

SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR.
Chairman
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
Washington, D.C.

Real genius

TO THE EDITORS:

Too bad your January 21 issue editorial, "Home Economics," calling for Paul O'Neill's removal from office, ran only days before his declaration that the rampant fraud at Enron represents nothing more than the "genius of capitalism"—a remark that ranks right up there with Marie Antoinette's "Let them eat cake."

JEFFREY HAMBURGER
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Science class

TO THE EDITORS:

In a vacuum, Siddhartha Mukherjee's arguments about scientific freedom might possibly seem sensible, but they disintegrate in the real world ("Fighting Chance," January 21). The issue has never been whether scientists should or should not pursue specific lines of research according to their own interests (they should, and they do). Rather, the concern is how to prioritize publicly funded research both between fields of science and alongside other societal demands to yield the maximum societal benefits. Undirected research may well be important intellectually, and could eventually yield social benefit, but the idea that useful knowledge inevitably and most efficiently derives from research motivated only by curiosity is nonsense. Mukherjee's assertion that "programmatic" research (such as the HIV/AIDS program) "leaves little room for ... serendipity" is simply false. Such research programs have led to such completely serendipitous discoveries as Teflon and a number of drugs. And his suggestion that such research is generally neither good science nor a good investment is inane: The electronic, material, computer, communication, and aviation technology revolutions of the past 50 years were made possible by world-class programmatic research funded primarily by the Department of Defense and the private sector. The fact that huge financial resources have been devoted to searching for treatments for AIDS—and that this search has had considerable success—does not imply, as Mukherjee suggests, that less money, spent on research motivated only by scientists' curiosity, would have led to equally effective outcomes. Rather, it means that some urgent problems are expensive to solve.

Finally, Mukherjee's lack of familiarity with his subject is revealed in his mention of Donald Stokes, who did not spend "his academic career studying Bush's compact" but focused mostly on electoral politics. In fact, Stokes's one short (and masterly) book about the "Bush compact," entitled *Pasteur's Quadrant*, consists of a demolition of precisely the argument that Mukherjee tries to make in his article. That Mukherjee cites Stokes to support a contrary position can only demonstrate that he either never read Stokes or that he completely misunderstood him.

MICHELE S. GARFINKEL
DANIEL SAREWITZ
Center for Science, Policy, & Outcomes
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Washington, D.C.

SIDDHARTHA MUKHERJEE REPLIES:

Garfinkel and Sarewitz accurately point out that Donald Stokes created his own formulation about the relationship between science and society. In my article, however, I only cite Stokes's description of the arguments of Vannevar Bush. Stokes deftly characterized Bush's formulation as a "compact" between science and society, and it's this characterization that is described in the piece.

TO THE EDITORS:

Mukherjee has it largely right, but he omits a crucial consideration: Basic (or

continued on page 41

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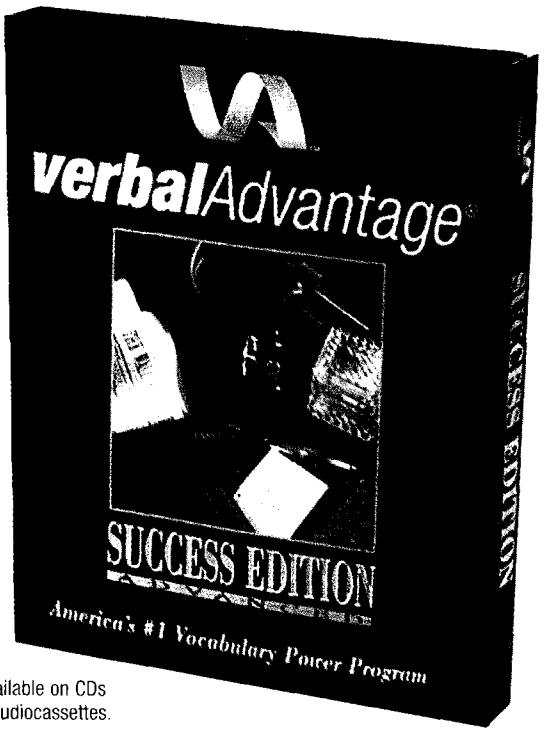

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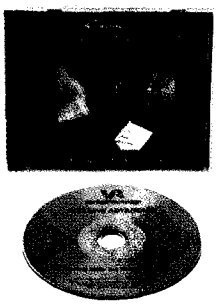

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

TRB

FROM WASHINGTON

Fail Safe

REPUBLICANS GENERALLY think of themselves as apostles of tough love. Ask them about welfare mothers, juvenile delinquents, or failing schools, and they'll tell you that without high expectations and stern punishments, compassion usually does more harm than good. During his presidential campaign, George W. Bush vowed to usher in a "responsibility era."

That ethos is particularly lacking, most Republicans believe, in government bureaucracies, which, sheltered from the discipline of the market, become insular, self-perpetuating bastions of mediocrity. In recent years the most common GOP response to government bureaucracies that fail to successfully educate children, deliver the mail, or operate railroads has been some version of "blow them up."

All of which might lead you to believe that faced with the insular, self-perpetuating government bureaucracy that failed to protect the United States from Al Qaeda on September 11—the CIA—the Bush administration would have come down like a ton of bricks. If you believed that, however, you were wrong.

Within days of 9/11, prominent senators were pushing for CIA Director George Tenet to resign. As Alabama's Richard Shelby put it one week after the attacks, "I always was taught that when you're in charge of something and have massive failure, you pay the price." But the Bush administration showed almost immediately that it wasn't interested in making Tenet pay any price at all. On September 26 the president journeyed to Langley to announce: "I've got a lot of confidence in him, and I've got a lot of confidence in the CIA. And so should America." Vice President Dick Cheney added, "It would be a tragedy if somehow we were to go back now in the search for scapegoats and say that George Tenet or any other official ought to be eliminated at this point."

That, it should be said, was a defensible position. Quick firings get a bureaucracy's attention, but they can punish the innocent and spare the guilty. The alternative was an independent, public investigation aimed at a fairer and more thorough apportioning of blame. And, in late September, the House Intelligence Committee called for just that—a blue-ribbon commission to investigate the "preparedness and performance" of the CIA and its related agencies. That investigation, the committee hoped, would produce "a cultural revolution within the intelligence community as well as significant structural changes."

But the Bush administration didn't support that either. And, just days later, congressional Republican leaders emasculated the committee's proposal, stripping the proposed commission of its right to issue subpoenas and grant immunity, and shifting its mandate from what went wrong. The commission, said Porter Goss, the Republican chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, would "focus on the future" and "get away from the blame game." In November, with the administration's support, congressional leaders put off all investigations until 2002.

Let's try, once again, to be charitable. In October and November, America's war in Afghanistan was in full swing—and the CIA was playing a critical role. So maybe it made sense to wait until things calmed down. Except that on January 29, after things had calmed down, the White House informed congressional leaders that it didn't want a blue-ribbon commission at all. The administration would cooperate only with inquiries by the House and Senate Intelligence Committees themselves. According to *Newsweek*, Cheney warned Tom Daschle that if the Senate pushed ahead with additional hearings, the White House might accuse him of interfering with the war effort and refuse to show up. Under pressure, Congress this week agreed to limit its investigation to the House and Senate Intelligence Committees, working jointly.

What's wrong with limiting the inquiry to the Intelligence Committees? First, they do most of their work behind closed doors. Second, much of what they do behind closed doors is go soft on the Intelligence Agencies. Goss worked at the CIA for ten years, and many of his aides also hail from various intelligence services. Not surprisingly, he has already declared that September 11 was "not a failure of intelligence," and Goss called Tenet "a very competent and able director." The upcoming hearings, Goss announced last week, will not be "a who-shall-we-hang type of investigation." As former CIA agent Reuel Marc Gerecht (writing under the pseudonym Edward Shirley) explained in *The Atlantic Monthly* in February 1998, "the oversight committees have become more often Langley's sympathetic partners than its demanding judges."

How would a commission of "demanding judges" apportion blame for September 11? No one knows. Tenet, who has won kudos for improving Agency morale and has spoken forcefully about the bin Laden threat in recent years, might come out fine. On the other hand, a tough, independent investigation would surely call someone to account for the deterioration of the CIA's human intelligence capacity since the end of the cold war. As Gerecht recounts, "Not a single Iran-desk chief during the eight years that I worked on Iran could speak or read Persian. Not a single Near East Division chief knew Arabic, Persian, or Turkish, and only one could get along even in French." Investigators might also bring to public attention the extraordinary recent revelation that as little as 7 percent of the data gathered by America's ultra-expensive satellites is ever analyzed.

And, while we don't know what good might come of a serious investigation, we know the harm that comes from the lack of one. As far as the CIA press office knows, no one at the Agency has resigned or been fired as a result of September 11. An informal CIA review into the World Trade Center attacks has found, according to *The Baltimore Sun*, "no glaring oversights by the agency," and there has been no major internal reorganization. Last week Tenet testified that, "when people use the word 'failure'—'failure' means no focus, no attention, no discipline—and those were not present in what either we or the FBI did here and around the world."

The CIA, in other words, says it didn't do anything wrong. That's not surprising—it's what Republicans would expect a bureaucracy to say. What *is* surprising is that this administration—in violation of everything it supposedly knows about bureaucracies—trusts the CIA to reform itself anyway. The Bushies imply that the CIA's work is too important to be hampered by pesky outsiders asking difficult questions. But it is precisely because it is so important that someone has to make sure the Agency learns from its mistakes. The administration also seems worried about hurting Agency morale. But, judging by its reaction to September 11, the problem is less low Agency morale than enduring Agency arrogance. A cynic might wonder whether all that talk about strict accountability and dramatic reform only applies to the parts of government the Bush administration doesn't like. When it comes to the agencies the White House prizes, it seems, the "responsibility era" can wait.

PETER BEINART

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Prison Terms

WHAT IS GOING on at Guantanamo Bay? While the Bush administration has made a few missteps in its war on terrorism, its decision to send some captured Taliban and Al Qaeda members to the U.S. naval base in Cuba—and its refusal to grant them prisoner-of-war (POW) status—has become a public relations fiasco. "The U.S. is placing these people in legal limbo," complains Amnesty International. "They deny they are prisoners of war, while at the same time failing to provide them with the most basic protections of any person deprived of their liberty." Even the British are upset. "It is very important for those people to be held according to the principles of international law," British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw has said of the Guantanamo prisoners. "[T]hat is the way in which one can maintain the moral ascendancy here, and the reverse is also true."

Criticisms of the Guantanamo Bay policy fall into four categories—none of them convincing. The first concerns allegations of actual mistreatment. After captured Taliban and Al Qaeda members first began arriving in Guantanamo on January 11, the Pentagon released photos of the prisoners in shackles and blacked-out goggles; cries of "inhumanity" quickly followed. The British newspaper *The Independent* likened Guantanamo Bay to a concentration camp; the *Mail on Sunday* tabloid ran the headline "TORTURED." But in fact, as has since become evident, the conditions at Guantanamo are far from inhumane. The pictures that sparked the outrage were taken shortly after the prisoners' arrival, while they were in transit to their cells—and most likely to revolt. Once the inmates settled in, the goggles and shackles were removed. Moreover, the prisoners are entitled to hot showers, prayer mats, and three meals per day. They also receive medical care. (One prisoner even underwent surgery for painful glaucoma resulting from an injury sustained five years ago.) Little wonder then that Taliban being kept in the Shibergan prison in Afghanistan recently shouted to an Associated Press reporter, "We want to go to an American prison!"

The second criticism focuses on international law. Although the United States may be treating the prisoners humanely, some are troubled that the prisoners have not all been officially afforded the protections offered by the 1949 Third Geneva Convention. But the full range of Geneva Convention privileges belong only to "lawful combatants" who, among other requirements, have a "fixed distinctive sign recognizable at a distance" and conduct "their operations in accordance with the laws and customs of war." These criteria clearly don't apply to members of Al Qaeda, and arguably not to members of the Taliban either. Nonetheless, President Bush recently decided that the Convention will in general terms apply to captured Taliban members at Guantanamo, but not to captured Al Qaeda. Yet neither group will be afforded POW status. (As POWs, the prisoners would be entitled to automatic repatriation to their home countries when the conflict ended.)

This compromise has not satisfied the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which maintains that the Geneva Conventions require that in cases of doubt a "competent tribunal" decide whether captives are entitled to POW status. But the ICRC is not the only arbiter of what the Convention entails; other legal scholars argue that the Convention mandates a competent tribunal only when fact-specific questions of an individual's status are at issue, such as in instances of deserters or those who have lost their identity cards. "If you stipulate that these detainees are members of the Taliban and Al Qaeda," says Ruth Wedgwood, an international law professor at Yale, "then there is no fact-specific question for a tribunal to decide."

The third criticism leveled at American policy is that if the United States does not grant the Taliban and Al Qaeda members POW status, Americans taken prisoner in future conflicts will not be treated in accordance with international law. But even leaving aside the fact that the United States *is* acting in accordance with international law at Guantanamo, it's hard to imagine a theoretical U.S. adversary that would adhere to international law if only the United States had read the Geneva Convention differently at Guantanamo. Saddam Hussein? The Taliban? A contempt for not only international law but also civilized norms is, after all, the one characteristic most American adversaries share.

The final complaint brings us back to where we started: public relations. Even if the prisoners are being treated humanely, and even if the Bush administration is acting in accordance with international law, some argue that the *perception* of what's going on at Guantanamo makes the United States look bad. But this criticism essentially asks America to abandon its own moral judgment—presumably in favor of the judgment of those who have opposed the war at every stage. But this is not a public relations war. It is a war. ■

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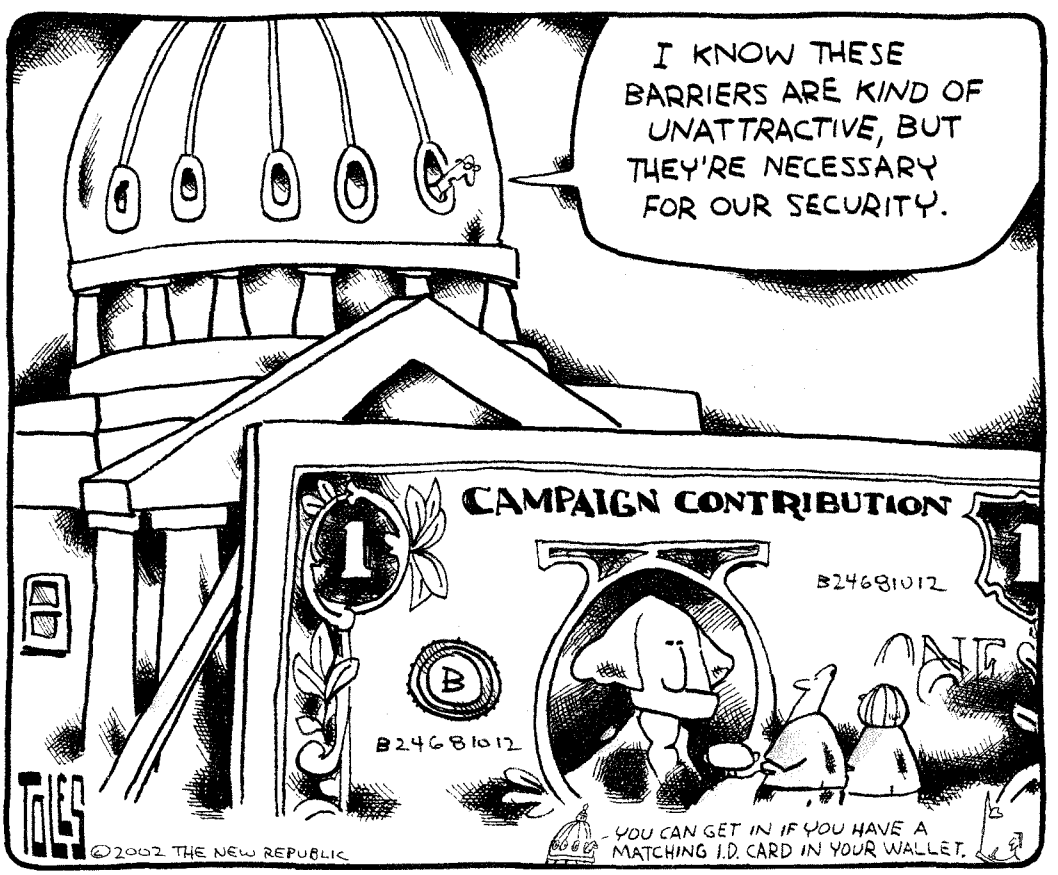
NOTEBOOK

DOWN ON THE FARM: Embarrassed by reports of wealthy individuals collecting millions in crop subsidies from the government, some farm-state senators are trying to limit payments to $275,000 per farmer per year. Iowa Senator Charles Grassley—who, along with North Dakota's Byron Dorgan, is sponsoring the cap—has argued that "[c]apping farm payments will restore integrity to farm programs." Actually, no: The entire idea of the government singling out people in a certain line of work for preferential treatment violates any notion of market logic or even common sense. All the new subsidy cap would do is lop off $1.3 billion over ten years from a $174 billion program that, by right, *shouldn't exist at all.* But that's not the worst of it: Due to the opposition of many in Congress, even this tiny reform may be killed. It turns out that a disproportionate number of Southern farmers have benefited from particularly outrageous payments—Tyler Farms of Arkansas, for instance, has received $38 million from Uncle Sam over the last five years—and their legislators intend to make sure they keep on benefiting. "This is nothing less than war on Southern farmers," raged Arkansas Senator Tim Hutchinson. "Do you know what this farm bill says to the South?" asked Georgia Senator Zell Miller. "'Hold still, little catfish. All I'm going to do is just gut you.'" Miller, of course, made a name for himself as the first Democratic senator to endorse President Bush's tax cut, saying at the time that "if we don't send this overpayment of taxes back to those who paid it, most of it will just be frittered away." He forgot to mention that, even if we did, the money would still be frittered away, and that he would be one of the chief fritterers.

AMERICAN GRANDSTAND: It takes special people to prompt feelings of sympathy for Ken Lay, but the members of the Senate Commerce Committee, it turns out, are pretty darn special. When the disgraced former Enron CEO appeared before the committee this week and, as expected, took the Fifth Amendment, the 21 senators practically crawled over one another to pummel Lay—a man whom, not so long ago, most of them were crawling over one another to ask for campaign contributions. "Mr. Lay, I've concluded that you're perhaps the most accomplished confidence man since Charles Ponzi," blustered Illinois Republican Peter Fitzgerald, who took $1,038 in campaign contributions from the confidence man's company. "[I]t's just not possible to determine why the Enron ship is at the bottom of the ocean unless you hear from the captain," thundered Oregon Democrat Ron Wyden, who took $4,000 while the ship was still sailing. "[I]t is, I think, deplorable, one, that either you didn't know what was going on, or two, that if you did know what was going on, how did you think that you could get away with it? It seems so obvious to anybody who looks at it that this was a pyramid scheme that was doomed to fail," said Nevada Senator John Ensign, who evidently missed those obvious signs while pocketing $7,500 from the company. "Clearly the chief officers of Enron failed in their duty and shamefully breached that trust," Virginia Republican George Allen ($3,500) lectured Lay, "and it's a responsibility you will bear, maybe not in this committee, but in your conscience and, I know, when you go to sleep every night...." "There's no better example than 'Kenny Boy' [of] cash-and-carry government," fumed South Carolina Democrat Fritz Hollings—who should know, given that he has cashed and carried $3,500 in Enron checks. One might imagine that in the course of their interminable fulminations, at least one of Lay's inquisitors would have acknowledged that he or she benefited from Enron's largesse. But apparently such petty disclosures are beneath the dignity of U.S. senators.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NEGOTIATIONS BREAK DOWN YET AGAIN: "Yasser Arafat and his West Bank security chief got into such an angry argument yesterday about the Palestinian uprising that the PLO chairman drew his pistol, sources said. In a scene out of a Wild West movie, bodyguards of both men also pulled out firearms before security chief Jibril Rajoub was dragged out of Arafat's headquarters, the Palestinian sources said."—*New York Post*, February 13

TOTAL RECALL: The Pentagon's new Information Awareness Office (IAO) harks back to those Strangelovean intelligence agencies of yore with deliberately ambiguous names and broad, mysterious ambits. IAO is charged with organizing databases to catalog information gleaned from the government's ever-expanding array of surveillance systems—the kind of top secret work you'd think would be restricted to officials who are above ethical reproach. Apparently not. After sorting through résumés, the brains at the Department of Defense decided this week that the person to run the new operation would be Admiral John M. Poindexter. A quick refresher for those lucky enough to have forgotten: During his one-year tenure as Ronald Reagan's national security adviser, Poindexter landed in a bit of trouble for his involvement in the Iran-Contra scandal and ensuing cover-up. According to the testimony of his underling Oliver North, Poindexter tore up a document signed by Reagan authorizing the sordid arms-for-hostages deal. Prosecutors found that, in his letters and meetings with congressional investigators, Poindexter fibbed left and right about his involvement. In 1990 a federal district court judge found him guilty of five counts of deceiving Congress. (The conviction was later overturned because he'd provided his testimony under an immunity agreement.) Even if the war on terrorism justifies the creation of this creepy new surveillance entity, it's hard to imagine that the Pentagon couldn't have entrusted its management to someone with a record of honesty. It hardly inspires confidence that the man now in charge of "information awareness" is best known for his cover-ups.

BETTER FIND A CLEVER GENTILE TO LOOK IT UP: "We're going to talk to the foundation members and determine exactly why the commentary's there and whether there is research to support it."—Jim Konantz, a Los Angeles school district official, explaining last week's decision to halt distribution of 300 donated copies of *The Meaning of the Holy Quran*, which describes Jews as illiterates who reject knowledge

SORT OF: "In some ways it's sort of the extreme of what American parents want their children to do . . . travel the world."—First Lady Laura Bush on John Walker Lindh's journey from Bay Area teen to Taliban fighter, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, February 13

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS: In Siddhartha Mukherjee's "Fighting Chance" (January 21), Franklin Roosevelt was described as participating in a debate over applied science "in the immediate aftermath" of World War II. In fact, the debate took place toward the end of the war, not after it; FDR, of course, died before the war's conclusion. We regret the error.

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS II: Peter Beinart's TRB "Social Disease" (January 21) incorrectly stated that "millions" of South Africans "have . . . died" of AIDS. In fact, while millions of South Africans have been infected and are living with the HIV virus, there is no evidence that millions have died. We regret the error. ■

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On the Hill

Under-Cut

By Michael Crowley

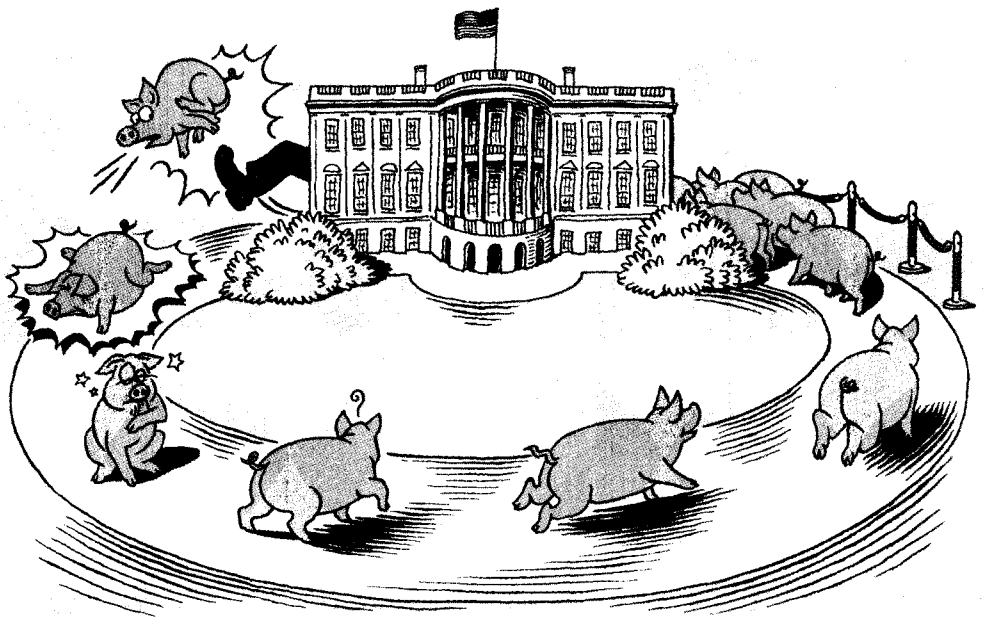
Representative Sam Graves surely considers himself important to the Bush administration. A Republican freshman from the Kansas City, Missouri, area, Graves has been a good conservative soldier during his first year in the House. And, given that he was elected with just 51 percent of the vote and is considered highly vulnerable this fall, the White House should want to help him. So Graves was presumably nonplussed when the administration singled out one of his few legislative accomplishments for ridicule earlier this month. As part of a White House campaign to appear fiscally conservative by targeting pork-barrel spending, the Education Department released a list of local projects that could be chopped this year to meet a shortage of money for Pell Grants. On the list was $273,000 that Graves had secured to help Blue Springs, Missouri, combat teenage "Goth" culture—that is, to keep kids who wear black lipstick and listen to Marilyn Manson from becoming the next Dylan Klebold.

Dozens of Graves's colleagues found themselves in the same boat. "Bush budget proposal: many Nevada projects at risk," declared the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. "Area projects feel the sting of Bush cuts," announced *The Wichita Eagle*. "Western New York funding feels heat from Bush's budget office," fretted *The Buffalo News*. The complete White House budget released a few days later went even further, ridiculing at length the congressional practice of "earmarking"—slipping funding into big spending bills, usually just before final passage, with no debate or scrutiny and citing many more frivolous-sounding examples.

The embarrassment is especially acute for Republicans like Graves, who want to show off their close ties to a president enjoying 80 percent approval ratings. Having the White House target your local projects is like being stuck behind the velvet rope of an exclusive nightclub: It looks like you're not a player. And, the thinking goes, that could be bad news when the midterm elections roll around. "Despite their party's rallying cry of fiscal restraint, many [Republicans] are distressed that Mr. Bush's proposals to cut members' domestic projects will imperil them in November," explained *The New York Times*' Richard Berke. Meanwhile, gleeful Democrats are publicly rubbing salt into the wounds of insulted Republicans, staging budget conference calls with local reporters, ginning up press conferences, and inciting community activists. Last week *Roll Call* reported that Ohio Representative Ralph Regula had been receiving phone calls from nervous colleagues "worried that the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee has already begun to use the issue to stir up trouble in their districts." One House Democratic aide puts it this way: "[The party] is looking for a wedge between an eighty percent president and House members on the ground.... This is putting a very human face on macrobudget cuts."

If only. The truth is that Democrats probably won't be able to exploit this battle between the White House and its congressional allies—because there isn't any real battle at all. As Jonathan Chait noted last week (see "Hide and Sneak," February 18), few if any of the projects the administration cites will actually be eliminated. Last year the White House made a grand show of chopping pork, but it abandoned the fight before expending one cent of political capital. And this year promises the same charade. In fact, not only will congressional Republicans get to keep their cherished goodies, but the administration's halfhearted war on pork may actually do them a favor by giving them a chance to battle back against the proposed cuts and show off their supposed clout in Washington. A GOP campaign official explains the political dance taking place: "The president gets to show himself as a defender against waste, fraud, and abuse. The member gets to fight for local spending in his district. It's a winner all around." The only losers are people who actually want to eliminate pork.

Pork is as old as elective government, but nearly everyone agrees that it has gotten out of hand in recent years. The White House notes that the number of congressional earmarks rose from 6,454 in 2000 to more than 7,800 last year—totaling about $15 billion in scrutiny-free spending. Take just a few examples from the last few years: $700,000 for a jazz-history institute at the University of Idaho (a pet



Christophe Vorlet

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Crime Statistics—the Only Game in Town

Joseph D. McNamara is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution.

The American public likes to believe that police officers are above partisan politics, but is this really the case?

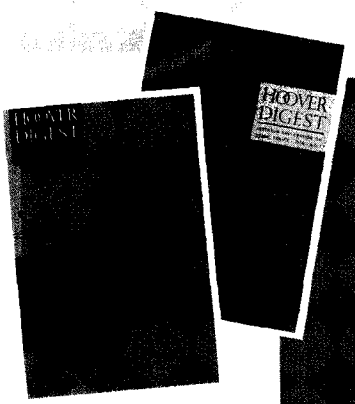
During my more than thirty years as a cop, I produced and sometimes created crime statistics. I started my police career almost half a century ago walking a solo beat in Harlem. My first arrest as a flatfoot was for first-degree murder by virtue of the fact that I bumbled into arresting the perpetrator while the victim lay dying on the sidewalk. During my next ten years in Harlem, I found that cops who were not so lucky but who reported robberies, rapes, burglaries, or other serious felonies with no arrest were unlikely to remain on the force. **No official order was ever given to underreport or not report crimes that weren't cleared, but an officer following the rulebook would soon find out from his sergeant that he had an attitude.** Once sergeants decided you had a wrong attitude it was time to look for another job. One cop I worked with had an outstanding felony arrest record; eight out of ten of his arrests, however, were for assaulting him after he had created an altercation—crime created by a police officer.

Approximately sixteen years after my first arrest, I had risen to the director of crime analysis for the NYPD. Stationed a few blocks from the World Trade Center with the responsibility for compiling and analyzing crime statistics for the city of New York, I found that things hadn't changed much. The mayor didn't like high crime stats with no arrests. Thus, the police commissioner didn't either. The precinct captains knew their careers depended on the amount of crime reported, and, of course, the sergeants knew quite well what the captains wanted. Consequently, it was a bad idea for a rookie to report a robbery with no arrest—much better to make it an unfounded report. It was not illegal, and we had become cops to avoid working in an office and dealing with paperwork.

So are the 30 and 40 percent crime reductions for which Bill Clinton and Rudy Giuliani claim credit phony or real? Some analysts credit full employment, additional police, mandatory sentences, maturation of the crack market, and better policing. Neither human nature nor politics, however, has changed through the years. Next time a candidate or "expert" tells us we need to spend more money to reduce crime, remember the old vaudeville joke: First man: "I saw you playing in that crap game last night. Didn't you know it was crooked?" Second man: "Sure, but it was the only game in town." In most towns, local politics is the only game in town when it comes to precisely counting crime.

— Joseph D. McNamara

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University



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project of GOP Senator Larry Craig); $1.5 million for a statue of the Roman god Vulcan in Birmingham, Alabama (a gift from Republican Senator Richard Shelby); $950,000 for a Dr. Seuss memorial in Springfield, Massachusetts (thank you, Senators Ted Kennedy and John Kerry and Representative Richard Neal). Even aides to congressional appropriators who fiercely defend their pork prerogatives admit the excess. "Do we agree that earmarks are getting out of hand? Hell yeah," says one.

Why has it gotten worse? For a period in the mid-1990s Congress's appetite for pork seemed to be waning. Americans had become deficit-conscious. And the GOP revolutionaries who stormed Congress in the 1994 elections were obsessed—at least at first—with cutting fat from the budget. But, by the late '90s, pork was making a clear comeback. For one thing, the budget surplus made it less shameful for a member (say, Senator Robert Byrd) to grab money for a dubious project in his state (say, $2 million for a Center on Obesity at West Virginia University). One GOP budget insider points to two other factors. One is the tight balance of power in Congress, which makes votes closer and, thus, allows members to extort more for their yea or nay. Also, the six-year term limits that Republicans placed on committee chairmanships in 1995 mean that powerful members are more inclined to help out their supplicant colleagues, knowing that their roles could soon be reversed.

In the budget itself, the White House eloquently explains the evils of all this pork: Even when the money may sound like it's going to a worthy endeavor (for instance, after-school programs), the administration notes, the effect is usually to divert money from a federal agency that might spend it more wisely or efficiently. Did Moscow, Idaho, (population 22,000) really need a $1 million "intelligent transportation" grant more than did dozens of other cities? Worse still are the cases in which members steer important scientific research projects to their districts—"an especially bad idea, because it enables special interest pressure to end-run the competitive selection of proposals through scientific peer review," the budget explains. In last year's agriculture spending bill alone, Congress approved 444 such projects totaling $317 million—up 39 percent from the year before.

If only the White House really believed its own anti-pork line. Democratic aides point out that the administration has been quick to buy off wavering members of Congress on key votes like trade-promotion authority and airport security by promising them pork projects in the budget. And the White House has made it pretty clear that the current war on pork will consist of a lot of talk and little action. In fact, Budget Director Mitch Daniels already seems resigned to its failure—he readily admits that his showdown with congressional appropriators last year was a fiasco. (Daniels was nearly run out of town by cranky budget barons like Byrd and Alaska's Ted Stevens, who suggested he "go back to Indiana.") Republicans who have called the White House in recent days are getting signals that their projects are safe. New York Republican Felix Grucci made such a call after learning of a local funding cut last week and, says his spokesman, "was assured he'll be able to keep that"; other offices report hearing the same message. And, in a meeting earlier this year with House Appropriations Committee Chairman Bill Young and other congressional appropriations "cardinals," Bush made it clear that, like last year, his priority is the budget's bottom line, not stripping out the pork per se.

Of course, Bush isn't the only one being insincere. All those members courageously fighting to restore their vital local projects can also be counted on to speak disdainfully of the "wasteful" spending a few states, or even districts, away. "You fight for your local projects and fight against unrestrained spending, which is spending in someone else's district," the GOP campaign official helpfully counsels. The message is already catching on. "There are, I suspect, pork projects out there that don't meet those minimum requirements" of legitimacy, Graves's spokesman says by way of defending his boss's anti-Goth dollars. "But this is not one of them." Of course not—those kids are scary! ■

White House Watch

Bone to Pick

By Ryan Lizza

George W. Bush and Ted Kennedy were aboard Air Force One last month, flying back to Washington from Boston—where they had just celebrated the signing of Bush's education bill—when the president gave the Massachusetts senator a dog bone. It wasn't just any canine biscuit. On it the president had scrawled a message to Kennedy's black Portuguese water dog, the senatorial pooch who was a constant presence during the yearlong education-bill negotiations: "To Splash, Great job on education. From, Barney and GW." The bone, along with a pen Bush used to sign the bill, are now framed and prominently displayed in Kennedy's conference room, a corny reminder of his shrewd alliance with Bush last year.

Kennedy got a bone, but Bush has gotten a whole lot more. The president has not only erased the once impenetrable advantage Democrats enjoyed on education, but recent polls show the public favoring him over congressional Democrats on this issue by as much as 26 points. A weekly analysis of survey data published by strategists James Carville, Stan Greenberg, and Robert Shrum and widely read by Democrats, warns that Bush's dominance on education and the economy "is the biggest threat to Democratic hopes of recapturing the House and strengthening their grip in the Senate in 2002."

In addition, Bush has turned Kennedy into his favorite applause line and a convenient prop to emphasize his own bipartisan bona fides. Rarely does Bush give a speech these days in which he does not heap praise on the senator for his work on the education bill. And Bush's favorite, endlessly repeated (and likely apocryphal) joke is that the folks at the Crawford coffee shop were shocked to hear him say nice

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things about Kennedy. All this goodwill peaked during the State of the Union address, when Bush again paid tribute to Kennedy and the chamber rose in a standing ovation.

Bush used Kennedy so successfully, in fact, that many congressional Democrats started to grumble. Some even dubbed the dalliance "part of the Kennedy legacy tour." But last week the contours of Bush's vaunted partnership with the liberal lion appeared to change. Now it is Kennedy who has the upper hand, and the senator is maneuvering to exploit his relationship with Bush on two fronts.

THE FIRST IS education spending. Last year Kennedy, afraid he would be left out of negotiations between the White House and moderate Democrats, moved to the center and cut an education deal with the president—thus helping to inoculate Bush on the issue. But this year Kennedy is using his own newfound bipartisan credibility to attack the president—criticizing Bush's new budget for delivering "a severe blow to our nation's schools." Kennedy now plans to stage a series of votes to force Republicans to make painful decisions about how much education funding they are willing to support. "We've now got the chance to go back and go on the offensive and demonstrate to the American public that Democrats are the true champions of education," says a Kennedy aide.

Meanwhile, Kennedy has also quietly positioned himself as the linchpin to any deal on the long-stalled patients' bill of rights. The Bush administration hopes to use the relationship to neutralize another Democratic perennial. But it now appears just as likely that Kennedy will use it to neutralize Bush on the issue.

Pre-9/11, the patients' bill of rights dominated the Washington agenda. A bill sponsored by Kennedy, John McCain, and John Edwards passed the Senate soon after the Democrats took over in May. Then Bush and congressional Republicans successfully amended and passed the House version of the Kennedy bill, forcing the legislation into a conference committee to work out the two chambers' differences. Ever mindful of its domestic agenda, the White House quietly reached out to both McCain and Kennedy shortly after 9/11. The McCain talks led nowhere; but, just as he had on education, Kennedy—relishing his new role as Washington deal-maker—eagerly got to work trying to find some common ground with Bush. Kennedy's top health care wonk, David Nexon, met intermittently in November and December with Bush's senior health care aide, Anne Phelps, in the Old Executive Office Building. Nexon is the Democratic staff director for the Senate committee that deals with health care, and Phelps was previously the Republican staff director, so the two know each other well and have sparred over these issues for years. Nick Calio, Bush's congressional lobbyist, and Josh Bolten, his top policy aide, monitored the talks, which progressed so far that Tom Daschle, fearful that Bush would score an important end-of-the-year victory, reportedly halted the negotiations in December.

Which brings us back to Air Force One. Zipping around the country together last month on their education-bill signing tour, Bush and Kennedy chatted for an hour about the patients' bill of rights. The staff-level talks then resumed in earnest, but last week they again crawled to a standstill. Kennedy and the White House have found some agreement on the right-to-sue provision that has blocked the legislation for years. Their emerging deal would allow lawsuits to be brought against HMOs in state courts using new federal guidelines. Defining those federal guidelines is tricky but, according to those close to the negotiations, surmountable. But the deal has a hit a major roadblock over another issue: whether (or how much) to cap pain and suffering awards to plaintiffs who win suits against HMOs. Democrats don't want any caps, and Bush has previously proposed a $1.5 million limit. Those involved in the discussions say that Senate Democrats have rejected a new Bush proposal that would peg damage awards to age and other variables associated with the plaintiff, arguing that the formula the White House has suggested would not adequately reflect the earning potential of younger people.

This week the talks seemed like they were dying, and Senate aides suggested that Kennedy was considering whether to abandon them altogether. This puts Bush in a bind—and puts his fate in Kennedy's hands. Behind the scenes, the White House has invested more political capital in this bill than in almost any other domestic priority since 9/11. To keep Kennedy at the table and reach a compromise bill Bush can take credit for, the president would have to make significant ideological concessions. If he doesn't, and if Kennedy publicly quits the talks and takes the bill into the legislative black hole of a conference committee—a prospect some Democrats would prefer—it will be a major setback for Bush, signaling that his wartime popularity has little practical effect on his domestic agenda.

That's why late Tuesday afternoon, just a few hours after Kennedy blasted the president's education budget, Calio found time during a frantic day of lobbying on campaign finance reform to stop by Kennedy's office. For now, he's persuaded the senator to stick with the negotiations. But we'll soon find out if Kennedy was the smartest friend Bush ever made or a monster of his own creation. ■

Galilee Dispatch

Good Fences

By YOSSI KLEIN HALEVI

THE BEARDED HEZBOLLAH man, arms folded and half-smiling, stood alone at the border fence on his daily vigil, just across from the Israeli army outpost called Tziporen. Beside him was a large metal sign imprinted with photographs of dead Israeli and South Lebanese Army soldiers—including a severed head—and the taunt in Hebrew, "SHARON, DON'T FORGET YOUR SOLDIERS ARE STILL IN LEBANON," a reference to three Israeli soldiers kidnapped in the fall of 2000, whom the army believes didn't survive.

I moved toward the fence to get a closer view but was

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stopped by an Israeli officer. "They're trying to provoke us all the time," he said. "Our policy is to avoid any contact with them."

That's why here at Tziporen, in the hills above the border town of Kiryat Shemona, the army has removed soldiers from the fence and confined them to a concrete fortress that resembles an aboveground bunker. Israel has taken a similar approach all along the 60-mile northern border, where the army has responded to Hezbollah provocations by contracting into bases and fortified outposts, trying to avoid a second front in the North as it deals with Palestinian violence. At the Fatma Gate, not far from Tziporen, the routine stoning of soldiers by Lebanese "tourists" brought to the border by Hezbollah stopped abruptly several months ago after the army replaced its troops with electronic monitors. And when Hezbollah men began appearing at the security fence of Kibbutz Misgav Am, the army asked the United Nations, which is based on the opposite hill, to intervene, and Hezbollah retreated.

Yet Israel's efforts to avoid confrontation with Hezbollah are becoming increasingly difficult. *The Christian Science Monitor* reported last week on "indication[s] ... that Hizbullah is preparing for war." Hundreds of fighters, the paper reported, are "marshaled along the border with Israel. A massive arsenal, including rockets and missiles, has been stashed away in the border district." In addition, in recent weeks, Hezbollah has fired a half-dozen times at Israeli planes, including one civilian aircraft near the border. The fundamentalist group claims the planes violated Lebanese airspace. Israel, though, insists that's not true, and shrapnel from anti-aircraft fire has fallen over three northern Israeli towns; so far no one has been hurt.

THE INCIDENTS HAVE scarcely been noticed by an Israeli public riveted to more immediate threats, like the Palestinian rocket attack into southern Israel this week. By contrast, the Galilee would seem to be the most peaceful region in Israel: White almond blossoms fill the rocky hills, snow covers Mount Hermon, and the roads are empty of the security roadblocks that segment the center of the country. But, however horrifying, Palestinian-Israeli violence is unlikely to escalate into regional conflict, simply because no Arab country has ever gone to war for the Palestinians and, even now, the Arab world offers them little more than lip service. On the northern border, though, an escalating confrontation with Hezbollah would almost certainly expand to include its Syrian protector and possibly its Iranian arms supplier as well.

Israel will respond to a Hezbollah attack that kills Israeli civilians even more severely than to Palestinian terrorist attacks. After all, Hezbollah, unlike the Palestinians, would be shooting over an internationally recognized border; and, with Hezbollah, there is a sovereign address—Syria—to hold responsible. Warns a high-level Israeli military source: "The next war, if it happens, will only happen from here."

Ironically, it was Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon nearly two years ago that may have created the conditions for the next regional war. Intended to extricate the country from a no-win conflict, the withdrawal actually convinced much of the Arab world that terror attacks can defeat Israel. Many Israelis believe that the current intifada was inspired by Hezbollah's success; indeed, in the months before the intifada began in September 2000, Palestinian activists intensively debated whether the "Hezbollah option" should be applied to the territories. And the intifada, in turn, has become the pretext for Hezbollah's continued role as a "resistance" movement. Its website, for example, has replaced the Lebanese flag with a Palestinian one—a sign, says one military expert, that the organization has redefined itself from a protector of Lebanese rights to the vanguard of the war for Palestine.

Hezbollah's ability to inflict damage on Israel far exceeds its numeric strength, estimated at 800 fighters and perhaps several thousand reservists. According to Israeli reports, Hezbollah has deployed some 10,000 Iranian short- and long-range missiles along the border, which is marked only by a fence. The withdrawal of Israeli troops from the security zone, and Hezbollah's redeployment along the border, means that those missiles are now able to hit as far away as Haifa—placing most of the Galilee within Hezbollah's range.

SO FAR HEZBOLLAH has kept away from Israel's red line: civilian casualties. Instead, the group has concentrated its fire on Israeli military installations in the contested northern border area the Israelis call Mount Dov—and the Lebanese and Syrians call Shebaa Farms—at a safe remove from population centers. According to the unwritten rules of the conflict, attacks on Israeli soldiers evoke less severe retaliation than attacks on civilians. After two Israeli soldiers were killed, and another two wounded, at Mount Dov last year, the Israeli air force destroyed two Syrian radar installations. Because civilians were not involved, both sides endured the mutual attacks without escalation. But the latest attacks on aircraft—which Israel claims took place in airspace above population centers—may signal a new Hezbollah willingness to risk accidental civilian casualties. Indeed, Hezbollah Secretary General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah publicly reveled in the proximity of Israeli civilians to the shooting. "The booms are heard by the ... chosen people, the Jews who were brought from all over the world to the northern settlements," he recently told a group of Hezbollah-affiliated students.

That recklessness is precisely what worries the Israeli military. "What would have happened if a civilian had been killed from falling shrapnel in Kiryat Shemona?" demands the military source. "A small mistake is enough to start a snowball. If a civilian is killed, it doesn't mean we're going to war. But there will be a strong response. And then if Katyushas fall here, I don't want to think of what may happen next."

While Israeli security experts assume that Iran wants to escalate the border conflict, Syria, they say, is more ambivalent. "Syria doesn't want war," says Eyal Zisser of Tel Aviv University's Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies. "But it does want Hezbollah to continue a certain level of attack" to induce an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights. "I see preparation for an explosion, but

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also great caution."

Still, he adds, the situation increasingly resembles the atmosphere before the 1967 Six Day War, when Fatah was attacking Israel from Syrian territory. Indeed, it was the threat of Israeli retaliation against Syria that led Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser to send troops into the Sinai demilitarized zone and block Israeli shipping in the Straits of Tiran, provoking Israel's strike against Egypt. "Then, too, no one wanted war," says Zisser. "But there was a feeling in the Arab world, as there is now, that Israel could be defeated by guerrilla war. When you play with fire, it's enough for someone to make a mistake. And then we have a problem."

Nowhere is a "mistake" more likely than at Rajar, an Alawite village on the northern border, just below Mount Dov. After the Israeli withdrawal in May 2000, the United Nations determined that the border runs through Rajar, and so half the village is now technically in Lebanon, the other half in Israel. No fence separates the two entities; many residents continue to work in Israel. At the entrance to the village—where an arch welcomes visitors in Arabic and in Hebrew—members of an elite Israeli anti-guerrilla unit check every car that enters and leaves. "Hezbollah visits us regularly," says a soldier who introduces himself by his army nickname, Yo-Yo. "Sometimes we wave at each other; sometimes we curse each other. Mostly it's routine. Boring, even. Until your outpost gets hit by a missile." ■

Jon Corzine's Enron problem.

Street Unwise

By Noam Scheiber

With ten congressional committees holding hearings on Enron, it's almost impossible for any one member of Congress to distinguish himself on the issue. But that hasn't stopped Senator Jon Corzine from trying. These days the freshman New Jersey Democrat sounds more like Ralph Nader than the former investment-banking pooh-bah he is. In an interview with *The Hill* newspaper last week, Corzine announced, "We need accounting reform, pension reform, corporate governance reform and, obviously, campaign finance reform." Accordingly, in the last two months, Corzine has sponsored a pension reform bill as well as legislation to ensure the independence of financial audits. He's called for consolidating financial-services regulation under the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the Federal Reserve, and for giving the SEC the resources it needs to fill that expanded role. And he's spoken out in favor of ending the conflict of interest among stock analysts whose own firms underwrite stock offerings. When it comes to the behavior of former Enron executives themselves, he's been even more outspoken. Reflecting on the investigative report recently released by a committee of Enron board members, Corzine declared that "if the facts of it are accurate, it's quite despicable and damning."

To hear Corzine tell it, his years of experience in the corporate world—culminating in his chairmanship of Goldman Sachs from 1994 to 1999—give him special insight into how to restore confidence in the stock market, and the credibility to pull it off. But his years of experience in the corporate world also make him partly responsible for what went wrong. And it's not just the vague responsibility that would fall on anyone who'd been a major Wall Street player at a time when dubious companies were being hawked to credulous investors at an unprecedented rate. As *BusinessWeek* and *The Wall Street Journal* recently reported, Corzine's former firm directly contributed to Enron's collapse by creating and marketing a financial instrument that the failed energy trader used to hide as much as $3 billion in debt between 1993 and its collapse last year. So when Corzine talks about the "despicable" behavior that made Enron possible, he may be implicating himself.

Around 1990 the major investment banks recognized they could make a killing by solving one seemingly simple analytical problem: how to design a "product" that would look like equity (i.e., stock) on a company's balance sheet but look like debt on the company's tax return. Such a product would give companies all the advantages of issuing debt (a generous tax deduction and money to finance expansion) but none of the disadvantages (a balance sheet saturated with liabilities). More importantly, it would generate huge underwriting fees for the investment bank that created it.

The problem was that the relevant U.S. tax laws were proving difficult to game. As early as September 1991, Merrill Lynch had successfully engineered a similar product for foreign firms, wherein the firm would create an offshore subsidiary, which then issued stock and loaned the proceeds back to the parent company. But if American firms tried this, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) would levy an onerous 30 percent withholding tax—a tax so expensive that it defeated the transaction's original purpose.

That is, until 1993, when a Goldman Sachs "product manager" named Christopher Hogg had an epiphany: If the subsidiary were set up as a limited liability company (LLC), it would be treated as a partnership for tax purposes, which would negate the withholding tax and leave all the benefits of the loophole intact. That spring Goldman dispatched its team at the law firm Sullivan & Cromwell to the Caribbean islands of Turks and Caicos, where they apparently wrote the necessary legislation and had the local government rubberstamp it. Goldman then began aggressively marketing the product, dubbed MIPS (monthly income preferred shares), and by fall of that year the investment bank had its first takers: two oil giants by the names of Texaco and Enron, which issued $350 million and $200 million of the securities, respectively.

Goldman wasn't shy about taking credit for the innova-

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tion. Hogg told the trade publication *Investment Dealer's Digest* (*IDD*),"This is a breakthrough transaction, for a U.S. company to issue a security with many of the attributes ascribed to equity, yet to receive a tax deduction." *IDD* itself characterized the development as a "coup for Goldman," which it proclaimed the victor in a "frantic race" to invent the first such product. By September 1994, right around the time Corzine became its chairman, Goldman had helped 17 companies sell some $2.7 billion of the securities, and almost $4 billion in sales were in the pipeline.

But Goldman's early advantage wouldn't last long. Merrill Lynch had finally gotten into the "trust-preferred securities" game itself that July, underwriting a $75 million MIPS-like issue for Goldman's old client Enron. Over the next few years the two would struggle to outdo one another, making their products progressively more attractive by skirting legal barriers ever more closely. According to one former high-ranking IRS official, "It evolved into a new offering a week . . . more and more instruments that had the dual character of debt and equity. They began to be refined, and if Treasury or IRS would indicate concern, it wasn't long before another instrument would pop up." Perhaps not coincidentally, it was during this same period that Corzine was rapidly restoring profitability to his firm, which had fallen on unusually tough times in the early '90s. (Charging an average commission of between 1 percent and 1.2 percent, Goldman has made tens of millions of dollars on MIPS-like issues over the last eight years.)

Of course, pushing to skirt tax laws hardly makes you culpable for another company's collapse. In principle, the trust-preferred securities Goldman and others marketed could have been just as attractive to responsible companies looking to save on their tax bills while beefing up their credit ratings as they were to flame-out candidates like Enron. In practice, though, the securities were most attractive to companies that would otherwise have had a tough time raising money. As *BusinessWeek* points out, the interest rates on the securities and the commissions charged by firms like Goldman to set them up were far higher than what a firm would pay on ordinary debt. A firm in better shape would have been less likely to pay this premium given the ever-present risk of a change in tax law that could leave it holding the bag. Indeed, the special appeal of MIPS to cash-strapped firms was touted as early as June 1994, when an article in *Petroleum Economist* recommended them to companies looking for a "finance option" when "a major issuance of debt would be difficult" because of the large amounts of debt they were already carrying.

By late 1995 officials at the IRS, the Treasury Department, and the SEC had concluded that the only way to rein in the trust-preferred securities market was through legislation. The moral suasion the government had been relying on since early 1994—"information gatherings" with officials from Goldman and Merrill Lynch, IRS notices threatening "scrutiny" of the products—had failed to restrain the practice. (As the *Journal* reported, Wall Streeters were extremely sophisticated at playing officials against one another, telling Treasury officials that the securities were really like debt and, hence, not a tax scam—and telling SEC officials that the securities were really like equity and, hence, not a way to sanitize balance sheets.) Meanwhile, the tax loophole MIPS had exposed had begun to cost the government hundreds of millions of dollars per year.

On December 7, 1995, the day Treasury was set to unveil its proposed legislation publicly, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Tax Policy Cynthia Beerbower briefly outlined the proposals at a meeting with top executives. The executives became apoplectic. One later fumed to *The Washington Post*: "She was belligerent and named particular firms, saying their products were abusive of existing tax laws and that Treasury was going to do something about it." *The Financial Times* reported that some executives were especially hurt that one of their own, then-Treasury Secretary and former Goldman Sachs Co-Chairman Robert Rubin, had his fingerprints on the legislation. And of all the firms, Goldman Sachs and Merrill Lynch had the most to be upset about: As the market leaders in trust-preferred securities, they stood to lose a major source of revenue.

Almost immediately, the firms and their industry trade group, the Bond Market Association, mobilized to thwart the legislation. According to last Monday's *Journal*, which documents the effort extensively, the lobbyists they employed amounted to a virtual who's who of Washington influence-peddlers: Mark Weinberger, now assistant Treasury secretary for tax policy; Nick Calio, now the top White House lobbyist on Capitol Hill; former Bush père IRS Commissioner Fred Goldberg; former Reagan Chief of Staff Ken Duberstein. The strategy, according to former Treasury officials, was to take advantage of the ill will toward Clinton on the Hill in the aftermath of that year's government shutdown. As one top former Treasury official puts it, "You have to put it in the context of . . . the strong partisanship at the time. For folks who had friends on the GOP side of the Hill, it was great time to hook onto something. Anything the administration wanted, the Republican leadership didn't." Once the proposals had stalled on the Hill, the industry could go to the administration and say there "wasn't any constituency that wanted [the loophole] closed except Treasury," as another former Clinton administration official recalls. And that's exactly what happened. By the summer of 1997, all but a few of the Treasury proposals had been abandoned completely.

While no one can say for sure that Enron's demise would have proved less disastrous had the Treasury proposals succeeded, there are reasons to think so. According to *BusinessWeek*, Enron's 2000 annual report revealed $8.5 billion in long-term debt at a time when it had as much as $3 billion more disguised as trust-preferred securities. Had Enron been forced to disclose the true size of its debt all along, the substantially higher figure could have alerted credit-rating agencies to the company's problems years before they eventually downgraded its credit rating and triggered its collapse. A lower credit rating would have hobbled Enron's expansion and discouraged investors, which would have limited both

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the company's rise and the damage from its subsequent implosion. Indeed, the Financial Accounting Standards Board, the accounting industry's standard-setting body, implicitly concedes as much. It recently announced that it would dust off an old proposal forcing companies to disclose their MIPS-like securities as debt.

If CORZINE'S ONLY role in this episode were as the head of a company that helped Enron hide its debts, and that then lobbied heavily for the right to continue doing so, that would be bad enough. After all, you can't chide Ken Lay for claiming he didn't *personally* engage in any wrongdoing and then turn around and plead your innocence on similar grounds. But, particularly on the lobbying front, there's reason to believe Corzine was much more involved than he lets on.

At the very least, we know from the *Journal* article that Corzine joined 30-odd Wall Street executives in signing a letter to key members of Congress protesting the Treasury proposals. But Corzine wasn't just your run-of-the-mill executive, signing whatever his corporate minions happened to place in front of him. In fact, by the time he assumed the chairmanship of Goldman Sachs in 1994, he was an experienced industry lobbyist. In 1983, while a general partner at Goldman, Corzine was named to the board of directors of the Bond Market Association (known then as the Public Securities Association, or PSA). He was elected as the group's vice chairman for 1985, and the following year he became chairman. During that time he led the PSA's dogged opposition to a component of President Reagan's 1986 tax-reform plan that would have cost investment banks millions in underwriting fees by closing a tax exemption on municipal bonds. One of the PSA's tactics was to hold "seminars" in which bond traders were instructed how to persuade state and local officials to lobby Congress on their behalf.

As late as 1991 Corzine was still active in the PSA, chairing the Borrowing Advisory Committee that met with Treasury officials every three months to discuss the government's debt-financing needs—and which critics suspected of giving the traders in attendance an unfair edge in subsequent bond auctions. And while Corzine became less involved in PSA once he took over at Goldman, it was at that point that he developed an even more important inside connection: his former Goldman boss, Robert Rubin, who was first a top economic adviser and then Treasury secretary to Bill Clinton. "There were those who thought that the [relationship] was a bit of a problem from time to time," recalls the former IRS official. "My sense was that [Rubin] was being lobbied heavily by his old buddies." Corzine's office insists there were "absolutely no calls" between Goldman officials and Rubin during this period. But there clearly was *some* contact between the two. In 1998, for example, *National Review* reported that Clinton had asked Corzine, a generous campaign contributor and longtime friend of Rubin's, for help with talking the Treasury secretary out of resigning.

Since the Enron scandal broke, Senator Corzine has traded on his corporate past in a different way, insisting with the authority of a former insider that Enron is not symptomatic of a larger breakdown in corporate behavior. Appearing on "Hardball" in mid-January, Corzine responded to a question about how common Enron's behavior was by insisting that "[Enron] is the exception, not the rule." In an interview with *The Hill* a few weeks later, he characterized Enron as "extreme and unusual." But it's not clear what Corzine's judgment on that question is worth at this point. As the former head of a company that profited from one of the biggest accounting scandals in history, he's not exactly in a position to be offering absolution. ■

The problem with becoming American.

Down Home

By RICHARD WEISSBOURD

AMERICA'S SUCCESS HAS long depended on the success of immigrant families. Just this month the Census Bureau reported that one in five Americans were either born in a foreign country or have a parent who was. And some of these immigrant families are soaring as never before: Urban school honor rolls swell with immigrant children; immigrant adults wield unprecedented power in universities, government, and business; immigrants own 40 percent of technology companies in Silicon Valley.

That's the bright side of the story. The dark side is quite shocking: The longer immigrant children live in this country, the worse, on average, their health, their attitude, and their school performance. What's more, with each subsequent generation, immigrant children do worse and worse. On average, first-generation children function at significantly higher levels than do typical American-born children. But, by the third generation, that advantage is gone. To take just one example, the school performance of first-generation Chinese teenagers—one of the highest performing immigrant groups—markedly exceeds white teens. By the third generation, the difference disappears: English proficiency and school performance are inversely related. In other words, while once upon a time people came to the United States expecting to make better lives for their children, today the sad fact is that the more Americanized immigrant children become, the less successful they are.

The most obvious cause of this slide is that classic villain: children's peer groups. "[H]anging out with ... peers who value socializing over academics," as Temple University's Laurence Steinberg puts it in his 1996 book *Beyond the Classroom*, causes immigrant children over time to "resemble the typical American teenager, and part of this package of traits is, unfortunately, academic indifference, or even

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disengagement." Peer influences, Steinberg and others argue, also drive immigrant teens to crime, drug abuse, and depression. With each subsequent generation, this argument goes, immigrant children spend less time with other immigrant children and more time with Americanized ones and, therefore, feel negative peer influences more and more strongly.

This story has some truth to it. Immigrant children pick up American youth culture very quickly. Marcelo and Carola Suarez-Orozco, Harvard researchers conducting a major study of immigrant children, observe that newly arrived immigrant children "talk about how beautiful school is and how wonderful the principal is." What do they say a few years later? "'School's boring and the principal is an idiot.'" As a former Boston school principal put it: "As soon as these sweet, respectful immigrant kids arrived, my whole staff would get this sinking feeling. We'd see exactly where these kids were heading, that pretty soon they'd have all the attitude of American kids."

But peer influences only explain so much. For one thing, peer influences are exceedingly complex and variable. Some are even positive: There is strong evidence that some peer groups influence children to stay in school and eschew drugs. Where peer groups do have a negative influence, the problem is often hopelessness: Research indicates that negative peer groups most often breed when children feel hopeless about their future as adults. What's more, negative peer groups have been around for as long as there have been immigrants—destructive teen gangs have existed in American cities since the late 1700s, and cracking on school and adults (remember Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer) has always marked American youth culture. But in the past, these negative peer groups notwithstanding, the performance of immigrant children didn't deteriorate the longer they stayed in the country, and succeeding generations didn't do worse than the ones before them.

A BETTER EXPLANATION for the decline in immigrant children's fortunes lies in a relationship even more defining than their relationship with their peers: their relationship with their parents. The more mature children are, the less likely they are to be negatively influenced by their peers. Mature children have a steady internal compass—a self that exists outside the particular impulses of their peers. And psychologists generally agree that the broad foundations of childrens' maturity come from their parents. Children need caretakers who communicate hope about their future; transmit important social and moral expectations; regularly listen to and understand them; and reflect back their understanding. Just as important is being esteemed by a caretaker who a child, in turn, respects and esteems. The psychoanalyst Heinz Kohut argues that, in adolescence especially, children mature by receiving the ongoing attention of adults who are not only esteemed but idealized.

Americanization erodes these critical aspects of parenting. Consider first-generation children and their parents. As the rates of single parenthood and maternal employment have increased in the last few decades, the time and energy parents have to focus on their children has declined. First-generation children today are far more likely than their counterparts of 50 years ago to be scraping for crumbs of time from a single parent who not only works but is frayed from ricocheting among two or three jobs. And, while research suggests that children in single-parent homes tend to fare as well as children from two-parent families if their parents are buoyed by relatives and neighbors who provide support, over time first-generation immigrant families tend to drift from relatives and tight-knit immigrant communities into more anonymous neighborhoods where that support is lacking.

PEOPLE DON'T USUALLY think of immigrants as single parents. But, because parents and children often arrive in this country at different times, many children are separated from their parents in the immigration process. In the Suarez-Orozco study, 85 percent of children were separated from at least one parent for extended periods of time; 49 percent were separated from both. Rates of family separation might have been as high in other eras; it's hard to know based on existing data. But what is clear is that these days children are more likely to be separated from their primary caretakers—their mothers—who are increasingly drawn to the United States by the high demand for service workers. (In the past, men usually came to the United States first, drawn by industrial or agricultural work.) The Suarez-Orozco study found that 55 percent of immigrant children were separated from their mothers during the migration process.

And even when parents are reunited with their children, it's often hard for parents to retain their high regard. American teenagers famously view their parents as out of touch with mainstream American culture—try naming a contemporary teen movie in which parents are not cartooned as disconnected dolts. But for new immigrant kids, the problem goes far deeper. First-generation children often don't respect their parents' values, and they view their parents as obstacles to forming an American identity. "[Vietnamese] parents are in, but not of, America," writes Min Zhou, a UCLA professor studying Vietnamese immigrant children, and their children "struggle to find answers to a set of difficult questions: 'Why do my parents object to my acting like other American kids? ... How can I fit in with my friends without offending my family? Can I ever grow up as an American in a Vietnamese family?'"

To be sure, these kinds of intergenerational troubles in immigrant families are not new; but they are exacerbated by the fact that so many families now arrive from culturally dissonant Asian and Latin American countries rather than European ones. Immigrant parents who embrace values such as collective responsibility and unquestioning deference to authority—prized in many Asian and Latin societies—can become increasingly alien to children embracing American notions of individualism and egalitarianism. Zhou observes that in Vietnam the self is not thought to exist apart from one's family.

At the same time, this cultural dissonance undermines traditional methods of parental discipline, a critical means of

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maintaining respect. The more that first-generation children are exposed to relatively permissive American families, the more they bridle at their own families' moral standards, causing deep parent-child ruptures. And some parents blame the government for literally tying their hands. I conducted a focus group with Vietnamese parents in Boston who fear that government social service agencies will take away their children if they hit them in any way. I've heard similar concerns from Haitian, Dominican, and Jamaican parents: The United States should not tolerate corporal punishment, but social service bureaucracies need to find a way to help these families replace disciplinary methods they've been using for hundreds of years.

But something else undermines the respect that first-generation children feel for their immigrant parents even more: the low-status service jobs in which those parents are often stuck. Perhaps more than ever before, children today are saturated not only with images that wildly glamorize wealth and fame, but that also degrade many common forms of work. It has become routine in schools to motivate drifting students by direly predicting that if they don't study they will end up "flipping burgers at McDonald's." The problem is that many immigrant parents *are* flipping burgers, or cleaning houses, or driving cabs. "A lot of immigrant kids see what their parents do for work and think their parents are chumps," says Mary Waters, a Harvard sociologist studying immigration. Even worse, it's an assessment that over time many immigrant parents come to share. "When many immigrant parents first get here they think that they have good jobs, that they're making a lot of money," adds Waters. "But soon they realize that they're not making much at all compared to other Americans. They feel like they've been had."

These changes in the way parents feel about themselves may also be key to understanding why second- and third-generation children fare worse than first-generation children. Many first-generation parents retain high hopes for their children even when they lose hope for themselves—that's why they work themselves to the bone. But as many of these children find themselves in the same low-status or menial jobs that dragged down their parents—immigration researchers now speak of a "rainbow underclass"—this kind of hope, too, may slip away. "What declines with each generation," says Carola Suarez-Orozco, "is parents' optimism, their belief in their children's futures." Children with hope can withstand a great deal; children without it are vulnerable to every adversity.

The forces that undermine immigrant families, then, are the same ones that undermine other poor and working-class American families: the awful choice between making a reasonable living and spending a reasonable amount of time with their children—and the self-destructive behavior of children who see themselves trapped in multigenerational cycles of poverty and despair. Conservative commentators often hold up immigrants as evidence that economic hardship doesn't represent a daunting obstacle to success in the United States. Look at immigrants, they say, who overcome dead-end jobs and crummy neighborhoods and move into the middle class because of their strong families and strong values. But new research makes emphatically clear that those jobs and those neighborhoods *undermine* those families and those values; far from proving the irrelevance of economic forces in circumscribing upward mobility, immigrants dramatically testify to its power. In that way, as in so many others, America's immigrants are just like everyone else. ■

Why is Bush demanding weapons inspectors?

Bluffing

By Lawrence F. Kaplan

The Bush foreign policy team is not, as its members delight in pointing out, the Clinton foreign policy team. Which is why it is so odd that they have been repeating one of the Clinton era's favorite mantras. In testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee last week, Colin Powell angrily demanded that Iraq readmit the U.N. weapons inspectors it expelled in 1998. Two weeks earlier the president explained, "Iraq is on the screen" because "after all, they're not letting our inspectors in." And, a week before that, Bush told reporters, "I expect Saddam Hussein to let inspectors back into the country." Most of his foreign policy advisers, however, expect no such thing. In fact, it is an outcome they wish to avoid at all costs. Because, once the first U.N. inspector sets foot in Baghdad, Saddam will have seized the initiative in the coming conflict between the United States and Iraq.

So why is the Bush team repeating the inspections line at every turn? Not because they mean it: With the exception of a few officials at the State Department's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, hardly anyone in the U.S. government has faith in the U.N. inspections regime. "The [administration] is just following up on the State of the Union," explains one senior official, "keeping the message out there that Iraq is a problem." And reminding the world about Saddam's arsenal is an easy way to do so, particularly since the State of the Union address defined the Iraqi threat in terms of weapons of mass destruction. The problem is, that definition points to a solution—weapons inspections—which could easily undermine the Bush team's true aim: regime

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change. Officials at the White House, Pentagon, and State Department downplay the possibility that the Iraqi dictator might actually call our bluff and admit inspectors. "The feeling is, we don't have to worry because we can trust Saddam to be Saddam," says one. But what if we can't?

THE POINT HASN'T been lost on Baghdad's foreign ministry. In the aftermath of President Bush's State of the Union address, Iraqi officials launched a diplomatic offensive—dispatching emissaries to, among other things, deliver the message that Baghdad was ready to "energize" relations with the European Union and begin negotiations on inspections with U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan. (Annan replied that, in the interest of "substantive dialogue," he would "check his calendar.") Saddam has also sent representatives to Russia and China; tried to initiate a dialogue with Kuwait; asked U.N. nuclear inspectors back into the country; and even extended an invitation to a U.N. human rights expert.

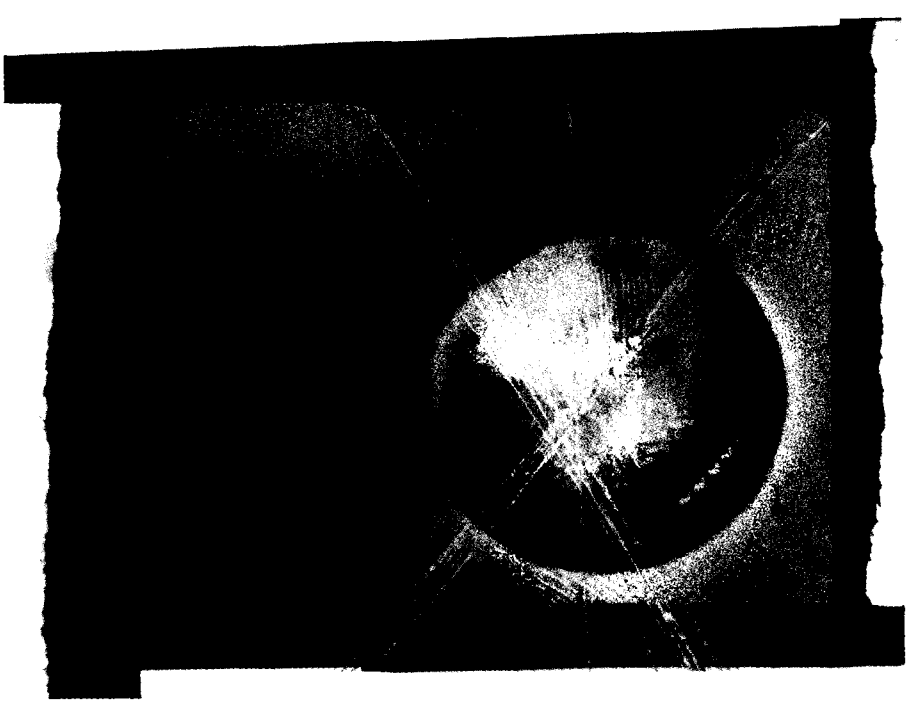
Former U.N. chief weapons inspector Richard Butler argues that Iraq's proposals will surely prompt the Europeans to say the United States "should get into talks with Iraq rather than take military action." And, indeed, the Europeans have begun touting the idea of a credible and intrusive inspections regime—one that won't be so easy for the United States to dismiss. Last week German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder demanded "unconditional inspections," while French diplomats have hinted to U.S. officials that they would support punishing future inspections violations with force.

Which sounds nice, except they probably won't. Countries like France, which refused to accept the conclusions of a December 1998 U.N. inspection report detailing Iraqi obstructions, have in the past defined "violation" in rather narrow terms. "Once the moment of crisis passes, France and Russia will revert to supporting Iraq," says Patrick Clawson, an Iraq expert at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. "Both have a record of crafting compromises that are halfway between what is necessary and what Saddam will accept." Moreover, the actual criteria for judging Iraqi compliance rests with the United Nations, which has a vested interest in certifying that Saddam has not thwarted what will, after all, be a U.N. enterprise—a vested interest neatly exemplified by Annan's 1998 declaration that, despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, Saddam is "a man I can do business with."

In fact, such compromises have since been built into the inspections system. After the collapse of the previous weapons inspections regime in 1998, the rules changed. Under the terms of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Committee (UNMOVIC) that were set in 1999, Iraq no longer has to eliminate its weapons of mass destruction to gain a reprieve from U.N. sanctions; it merely needs to demonstrate "cooperation." UNMOVIC was also designed to be "more aligned with the rest of the U.N. system, rather than being supported by the major Western countries"—another way of saying that it was designed to be less responsive to the United States. And UNMOVIC's executive chairman, Hans Blix, has a reputation for being far less forceful than Butler, the gruff Australian who previously held the post—a reputation Blix earned by, among other things, his utter failure to uncover Iraq's nuclear program when he was director of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) before the Gulf war.

Then there is Saddam's role. Administration officials seem confident it will never come to this, but if weapons inspectors actually do set foot inside Iraq, the Iraqi dictator will likely pick up where he left off in 1998—playing what Iraqi defector Khidhir Hamza calls "the same old game of hide and seek." Even if UNMOVIC did find evidence of weapons of mass destruction, that would only begin what former deputy chairman of the U.N. weapons inspections team Charles Duelfer calls the "salami-slicing" or, as several members of the Bush team prefer, the "palace game." That game reduces American presidents to pleading the case for war against Iraq not on the basis of sweeping principles or blatant Iraqi malfeasance, but on the grounds that Iraqi officials have placed a particular palace or a warehouse off-limits to inspectors—a *causus belli* that countries like Russia and France have rejected in the past. Nonetheless, a senior administration official insists that "even if inspectors do go in, the first time they get shut out, that's all the cause we need." But if the Bush team plans to incur all the costs of multilateralism without gaining any of the diplomatic benefits, then why not skip the exercise altogether?

Ultimately, of course, the fundamental problem with framing America's conflict with Iraq in terms of weapons inspections is that it's simply not true. The problem with Saddam isn't his toys. It's Saddam. Which is why the answer isn't more



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weapons inspections and why the Bush administration has rightly enshrined regime change as an official aim of U.S. policy. Yet, having suggested—to Saddam and to domestic and international audiences—that inspections offer an appropriate solution, the administration must now brace for the possibility that it may get what it's asking for. Hence, it has begun debating how to make Saddam an offer he can't accept—by, for instance, employing the compliance standards of the 1991 cease-fire; insisting that inspectors not begin work until the Iraqi dictator has provided a credible inventory of his arsenal; or delivering what one official describes as a "Taliban-like" ultimatum. As Powell put it last week, "The inspectors have to go back in under our terms, under no one else's terms.... The burden is on this evil regime to demonstrate to the world that they are not doing the kinds of things we suspect them of." The burden, however, may soon be our own. ■

The case for an American Osirak.

Smart Bomb

By GREGG EASTERBROOK

BECAUSE THE BUSH administration is fighting Al Qaeda and threatening Iraq simultaneously, it's easy to lump both together: Indeed, George W. Bush's State of the Union address managed to confuse on just that point. But the Iraq problem exists independent of September 11: It is that Saddam Hussein is acquiring atomic, chemical, and biological weapons. Baghdad has now had several years, without inspection or bombardment—but with hard cash from the relaxation of the U.N. oil embargo—in which to manufacture the means of mass murder. Decisive action must be taken before Saddam uses what he has acquired. This would be the case even if September 11 had never occurred.

The current Iraq debate basically pits the timid—who want U.N. resolutions, scolding, and bluster—against the interventionists, including this magazine, who believe that the Iraqi National Congress can become the next Northern Alliance. All concerned favor "toppling Saddam," as though that involved pushing a button. But short of invasion, there is no sure way of lifting the darkness that covers Iraq. There is, however, an option that is straightforward, simple, and fast: a determined aerial attack—not against Iraq generally, but against its facilities for weapons of mass destruction. No national infrastructure would be harmed, so as not to worsen the suffering of the oppressed Iraqi people. Weapons sites alone would be targeted, in a campaign that continued as long as necessary until Iraq's weapons manufacturing facilities were windblown rubble.

To do so, the United States would employ a new form of aerial war. Overlooked in analysis of events in Afghanistan is that American forces are now capable of an unprecedented type of air attack: one in which nearly every bomb hits its target (even if, tragically, some targets are wrongly chosen) and the majority of munitions are released not by strike aircraft flying low in harm's way, but by bombers at high altitude, far beyond the range of most ground weapons. This new form of air war—which does not yet have a name, in part because the technology that underlies it has taken even the military by surprise—means American flying forces can do far more against ground targets than they could during the Gulf war. An air campaign using new technology and tactics to destroy Iraqi weapons facilities might occur with few, if any, U.S. casualties and with little risk to civilians, unless they work at weapons sites. Perhaps such a campaign would inspire the overthrow of Iraqi tyranny; perhaps not. Either way it would make the world—including the Arab world—a lot safer.

When UNSCOM, the U.N. organization created to monitor Iraqi disarmament, arrived after the Gulf war, it found a nation madly building weapons of mass destruction. Iraq contained at least 16 "main facilities" for atomic weapons, only two of which had been bombed during the Gulf war. One particularly worrisome site, called Zaafaraniya—North 32 degrees 32 minutes, East 46 degrees 29 minutes, if you happen to be targeting a cruise missile—included a production line for "calutron" equipment, used to make bomb-grade fissile materials. (Though Iraq is not believed to possess atomic weapons, it may have most of the pieces; see "The Big One," November 5, 2001.) UNSCOM also discovered at least 34 Iraqi installations for the research and production of chemical and biological weapons, including the Fallujah complex—three large factories, the first located at North 33 degrees 32 minutes, East 43 degrees 37 minutes—which contained extensive equipment for making nerve agents and other chemical weapons.

The Fallujah complex and other weapons sites were bombed during the Gulf war but not necessarily put out of action. For one thing, Gulf war bombing focused on helping coalition troops prevail in the field, not on destroying Iraq's military manufacturing. Second, when the Gulf war began—after a six-month coalition buildup—some of Iraq's weapons were already in protected underground installations. Third, pre-UNSCOM, U.S. intelligence did not realize how extensively Iraq was gearing up to produce weapons of mass destruction. And, finally, most of the munitions dropped by the United States during the Gulf war were standard "dumb" bombs, as likely to miss their targets as to hit them.

Twice since the Gulf war, the United States has carried out

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limited strikes on Iraqi weapons facilities. In 1993, after Saddam barred U.N. inspectors from most of Zaafaraniya, American ships fired 44 cruise missiles into the facility, damaging but not destroying it. After UNSCOM was expelled in 1998, U.S. and British forces conducted Desert Fox, a strike employing 325 ship-launched cruise missiles, 90 air-launched cruise missiles, and 600 mostly "dumb" bombs. Many weapons-production and storage facilities were hit, among them rebuilt areas of the Zaafaraniya complex and sites associated with development of Al-Samoud, a supposedly short-range (and thus legal under the U.N. compact with Iraq), but probably medium-range, ballistic missile intended to menace Tel Aviv and Riyadh. Bomb damage assessment showed that fewer than half of the targets attacked in 1998 were destroyed, partly owing to use of dumb munitions.

Since 1998 Iraq has been free to do as it pleases, without inspection or military confrontation, other than occasional small missiles fired at air-defense batteries as part of U.S.-British enforcement of the "no-fly" zone. Since then, Saddam has siphoned off an estimated $1 billion to $2 billion annually from the "humanitarian" revenues of Iraqi oil sales—and it's a good bet that much of that has gone into weapons of mass destruction. The sad truth is that, without inspectors, no one can say for sure how much progress Saddam's weapons builders have made, as satellites see only the outside of facilities. "If we could figure out what they were doing from the sky we wouldn't have needed UNSCOM in the first place," notes Michael Levi of the Federation of American Scientists. Most of what is known about recent Iraqi weapons production comes from defectors, who describe a continuing, near-fanatical emphasis on acquiring atomic, chemical, and biological arms, fissile materials, miniaturization equipment for atomic warheads, and ballistic rockets that can carry these parcels of hell to neighboring states.

In short, the writing is on the wall, and it is dangerous self-delusion not to read it. The threat will probably remain even if Saddam again admits inspectors, since he will almost certainly subject them to another round of his deadly hide-and-seek (see "Bluffing," by Lawrence F. Kaplan, page 19). The best way to ensure that Saddam does not stockpile weapons of mass murder for use against his neighbors, the West, or his own people is to destroy Iraq's weapons sites. And, fortunately, the United States now has the military capability to do just that.

A MERE 10 PERCENT of the bombs dropped by the United States during the 1991 Gulf war were precision-guided. By the Kosovo air campaign in 1999 that figure had risen to around 50 percent; and, in Afghanistan, it has been at least 60 percent. Design breakthroughs and lower prices have made it practical for most U.S. munitions to graduate to "smart." Mavericks, the primary Air Force precision munition during the Gulf war, cost at least $130,000 per shot and were therefore used sparingly. By contrast, each JDAM—America's current primary smart bomb—costs less than $30,000. Bush's 2003 Pentagon budget request doubles JDAM production, anticipating that it will basically make the "dumb" bomb obsolete.

And, even as smart munitions grow less expensive, their IQs are rising. In the last decade the chips, lasers, and inertial gizmos that steer precision-guided munitions have become far more effective. Equally important, a new class of smart munitions has been added—those, like JDAM, that are controlled by data pulses from the Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) network rather than by lasers or fancy cameras. Just as civilian GPS transponders can now tell cars precisely when to turn down a street, encrypted GPS military signals can tell a bomb where it is in three-dimensional space to an accuracy of less than one meter. The latitude and longitude coordinates given earlier in this story would seem hopelessly primitive to a GPS-guided device.

Smart munitions are not perfect: Their electronics can fail, or they can accurately blast a target programmed in error. (Accurate blasting of the wrong target has been the awful cause of U.S. and civilian deaths in Afghanistan.) But, in the Afghan campaign, smarter smart bombs coupled with the declining use of unguided munitions have allowed American pilots reliably to put bombs within ten feet or less of the objective. In World War II the "circular error probable" of bombing was measured in thousands of feet; as recently as the Gulf war, it averaged around 100 feet—and a bomb missing by 100 feet will not destroy a reinforced object. Accuracy to within ten feet means good night, Irene.

To top it off, the cheaper, more accurate new JDAM carries a 2,000 pound charge, versus 125 to 300 pounds of explosives on older, Maverick-class weapons. As recently as 1998 the air-launched cruise missiles employed against Iraq were rare among precision weapons in mounting warheads of one-ton size: the biggest fists, and too expensive to use often. Today the one-ton, relatively cheap JDAM means that the United States could hit Iraq with thousands of big fists, with great accuracy.

AND IT'S NOT just technology that's changed. Equally important, air war tactics have also changed significantly in the years since Desert Storm—in fact, they have changed significantly in the two years since Kosovo, something largely overlooked in the coverage of the Afghan conflict. From Vietnam through Kosovo, standard U.S. tactics called for heavy bombers such as B-52s and B-1s to drop unguided dumb munitions from a high altitude—effective against a large industrial complex or massed armor, but not accurate enough to be sure of hitting, say, a particular building. Smart munitions that could hit with precision were borne by tactical aircraft, such as the Air Force F-15 and F-16 fighters and the Navy F-18. Those strike fighters needed to fly fairly close to their targets to lock on their munitions' precision-guidance systems, exposing pilots to a far greater risk of being shot down than their compatriots at high altitude. (Cruise missiles guide themselves to targets without any risk to aircrews, but, at $2 million apiece, they must be saved for special missions.) And, unlike heavy bombers that can carry many tons of ordinance, tactical aircraft only carry small loads—usually two smart bombs per mission. As a result, as recently as the Gulf war, destruction

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of a large factory complex might require hundreds of tactical "sorties."

Enter the JDAM and a similar, new, low-cost smart bomb called the "wind-corrected munition," which uses advanced gizmos to prevent wind drift. Both can be dropped from bombers flying high above ground fire. In Afghanistan, the first conflict in which they were used routinely, these bombs have proved as accurate as munitions launched from low-flying tactical planes, to the astonishment of military planners. Combine this with the fact that a B-1 can carry 24 JDAMs rather than the two typically carried by a strike fighter, and you can understand why the bulk of the bomb tonnage in Afghanistan—roughly two-thirds—has been dropped from high altitude by a handful of heavy bombers rather than by swarms of tactical fighters. Finally, because bombers have much longer ranges than fighters, accurate air attacks can now be staged over great distance without necessarily requiring fighter bases nearby or aircraft carriers in local water.

The success of this new form of air war has taken military planners sufficiently by surprise that it is not yet reflected in the Pentagon budget. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld took office wanting to retire 33 of America's existing 93 B-1 bombers, on the theory that bombers were yesterday's news. His 2003 budget proposal stands by this goal, while endorsing hundreds of billions of dollars for 2,000 or more of the new Joint Strike Fighters—planes whose main task would be delivering low-altitude smart bombs.

The bad news, if you are a Joint Strike Fighter contractor, is that technology just leapfrogged part of your mission. The good news is that a high-altitude bombing campaign against Iraq (or any other adversary) could now deliver far more punch far more accurately than was possible even a few years ago.

This does not, of course, mean that a campaign against Iraq would be easy or without risk. Iraq has at least some surface-to-air missiles that could threaten high-flying bombers; these would have to be "spoofed" by jammer planes or destroyed by low-flying strike aircraft. And while atomic reactors and chemical storage facilities are the sort of stationary targets that invite bombing, bioweapons laboratory materials are small enough to be put in a truck and moved to another location. No military action, short of occupation, will destroy Saddam's entire biological weapons program.

Some of the worst stuff may also be hidden underground. The United States has developed several "bunker-buster" bombs in recent years—including munitions that burrow into earth or concrete before detonating; a bomb that flies through a blast door and then skips down the corridor before exploding; and a "thermobaric" explosive optimized to produce heat and extreme air pressure. But because no current "buster" weapon works below about 100 feet, there's no guarantee that an air attack can eliminate deeply buried targets. The Bush administration has asked the Pentagon to begin researching small nuclear warheads that would burrow into the earth and shatter deep underground facilities without releasing much radiation. But the decision to use such a weapon would be extremely contentious, and it wouldn't be ready for years anyway.

Another risk is that a sustained campaign against Iraqi weapons facilities would lead Saddam to lash out by launching missiles at Israel or Saudi Arabia. Iraq is believed still to possess perhaps a dozen Scuds on mobile launchers that are almost impossible to find; and, it loaded Scuds with nerve gas during the Gulf war. The "short-range" Al-Samoud might also carry poison gas. (Whether gas dispensed by missiles would work is unknown, but the risk is real.) Saddam did not respond to Desert Fox by launching missiles, perhaps to avoid provoking a more determined campaign. Once such a campaign was in progress, he might feel he had nothing left to lose. Balanced against this risk is the chance that Saddam will someday fire the missiles when they are far more dangerous than they are today, tipped by atomic warheads—a risk that only grows the more time his regime is given to perfect weapons of mass slaughter.

On September 11 we learned there is a moral obligation to act in advance against those who plan to do mass murder. If ever a preemptive attack were justified by such obligation, it is against Saddam's Iraq. The target should be weapons facilities, not the country as a whole. The means should be the new technology and tactics of air war. And the time should be before it is too late. ■

ANASTASIA VASILAKIS

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Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Examined Lives

THE ITALIAN FILM-MAKER Nanni Moretti has had a schismatic career. Almost unknown in America, he is a critical and public darling in Europe, a winner of festival prizes. Because he writes and directs and stars in his films and because his roles are generally quiet and thoughtful, and sometimes thoughtfully comic, he has been compared to Woody Allen. (No physical resemblance: Moretti is tall, slim, bearded, good-looking.) This is to compare George Gershwin with Stephen Sondheim simply because each wrote smart songs about contemporary life. For all the comic touches, Moretti's work is predominantly and uniquely serious. His continuing subject, in modes much deeper than Allen's occasional such forays, is himself.

Moretti began making films in 1973, when he was twenty; five years later he made *Ecce Bombo*, considered by many the prime European picture of its time about people of his age. It was a big success abroad, yet to my knowledge it was not released here. The first Moretti film to arrive was *The Mass Is Ended*, in 1985, which was sandbagged by New York critics. Therefore—a grim therefore—it had few further American showings. For me, it is an important work. Moretti plays a priest in his early thirties, again just about his own age, who is transferred from a country church to his native city, Rome. Now he is a cleric amidst the people with whom he had gone to school and alongside his own troubled family. Burning with faith and with the knowledge that this very faith is dividing him from his family and his friends who do not share that faith so fully, the priest collides with the difficulties of religion in our day that were apparently troubling Moretti himself.

Palombella Rossa (1989) was about the problems of a politically radical water-polo player. (Moretti was once on a national water-polo team.) In *Caro Diario* (1994), he actually appeared as himself, in a three-part film that dealt with his problems as a director and with a treatment for cancer that he underwent—successfully. I emphasize that the three Moretti films seen in this country are only a skim of his eighteen features and shorts.

Now comes the nineteenth, **The Son's Room** (Miramax). Sensitively directed and engagingly cast, it continues Moretti's fictional/true autobiography. (Like the protagonist, Moretti is now a father. Heaven forfend that he ever undergo what his character undergoes, but he is now well able to imagine it.) The setting is Ancona, a small city on the Adriatic. Moretti plays a psychoanalyst named Giovanni (which is his own real first name), who has a busy practice, a wife, and a teenage son and daughter—a warm, closely knit family. For almost half of the film, we simply follow their lives. We know, because we are all well-trained filmgoers, that something disruptive is bound to happen, but, unlike ordinary movie carpenters, Moretti does not heavy-handedly set up cozy goodies in a row, patently predicting that they are going to be knocked down. Instead, he takes us along with the dailiness of living—interesting because of the truth of the people.

Something else holds us, even, I think, if this is one's first time with Moretti. He presents a duality. He is quite credibly Giovanni, but, as he has been before, he is also Moretti, using the character as a way of exploring himself and the world. There is a very subtle touch of Brecht in this process, without any Brechtian contest between presentation and representation. Moretti seems to be savoring the film, learning as much about it as we do while it goes along. Admittedly, this procedure lowers the emotional tone of his acting, but this is redressed by an appealing flavor—performance plus thoughtfulness.

The expected disruption occurs, terribly. The son is drowned in a diving accident. The impact of the horror is all the more grueling because Moretti and his wife and daughter are people, not film characters with big scenes. The boy's room is left untouched, almost as a means of maintaining his presence. A further stab comes with a letter to the son from a girl unknown to the family, who met the son for just one day and writes to him in the hope that they will meet again. This touch is justified, and in an odd way verified, because a few months after the accident she visits the family, not disconsolate but with another boy with whom she is hitchhiking to France.

This leads to a conclusion that, with gentle clarity, completes the film. The analyst and wife and daughter drive the hitchhikers to a place where they can more easily hitch a ride, but when they get there the hitchhikers are asleep in the back and Giovanni does not want to wake them. So they all drive all night to the west coast, where the traveling pair can get a bus for France. After the bus leaves, Giovanni and his wife suddenly trickle into laughter. The daughter, puzzled, asks them why they are laughing. They do not reply: they just keep on laughing. But we know why. They have learned that life is irresistibly, almost brutally, continuous. The hitchhiking girl has recovered from her attraction to their son and has found another boy. Giovanni and his wife have found, through this unintended all-night drive to the Ligurian sea, that they are still responsive to affection and hope. The death of their son has begun to become a fact of their lives that they will carry with them; but they will carry it with them, not halt. So they are laughing, bereaved yet at least partially liberated. We are left wondering whether, when they return home, they will keep the son's room as it was.

We can also wonder whether *The Son's Room* will raise Moretti's American status to something like his European level. As the phrase goes, it is to be hoped.

William Shakespeare was at least fifty other people, according to various claimants. Each one of the fifty candidates is promoted as the real author of the plays, chiefly because the claimants disbelieve that a relatively unschooled glover's son from Stratford who became a minor actor in London and who never left England could possibly have been the author. One of the chief nominees for the laurel is Christopher Marlowe, and now there is a lively documentary on the Marlovian putsch. **Much Ado About Something** (Helpful Eye) was made by Michael Rubbo for Australian broadcast and is shown at the Film Forum in New York, where, with bright interviewees, brisk editing, clean photography, and good questions by the unseen Rubbo, it sparkles along. Clips from Shakespeare films season the mix nicely.

The theory propounded here is that Marlowe (born the same year as Shakespeare) was not killed in a brawl in 1593, but that the brawl was a fake arranged to smuggle Marlowe out of the country

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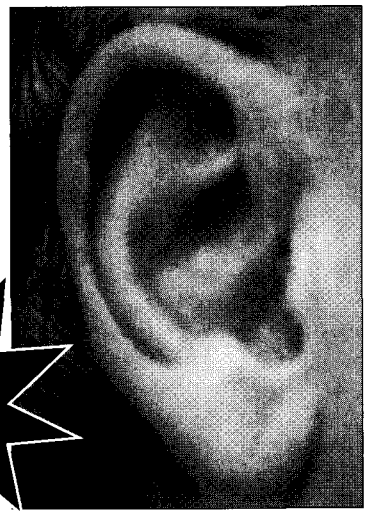

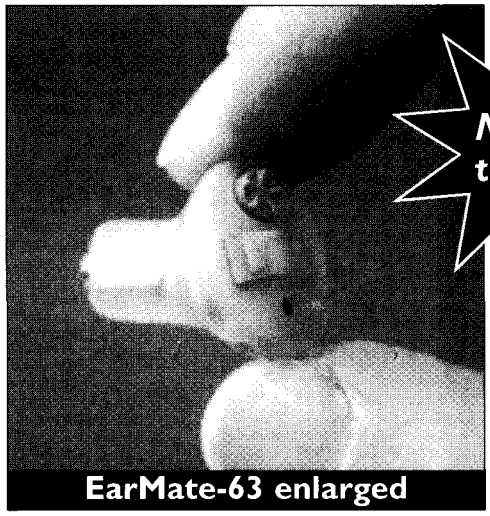

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for political reasons; that he fled to Italy, where he wrote plays that were then shipped back to England, transcribed by another hand, and attributed to a front, William S. The film presents a number of men and women, British and American, who have devoted their careers to this theory and written books to support it, and all of them are brimming with belief. Some dissent is offered, mostly from the fine Shakespearean critic Jonathan Bate.

A credible opinion was well put—elsewhere—by George Wilbur Meyer of Tulane. "It is unlikely that Marlowe could have written Shakespeare's plays had he lived a thousand years.... But Shakespeare would have been different, at least for a time, had Marlowe not lived. Shakespeare knew that he had learned from Marlowe." My own view is: what difference does it make? As long as we have the works, what substantive difference does it make whose name is on the title page? Rubbo in fact asks this question of one of the Marlovians, whose answer is vociferous but evasive. But Rubbo's intelligent questions, his subjects' enthusiasm, and their occasional anger make for a crackling ninety-four minutes. ■

The epic of Pablo Antonio Cuadra.

A Child of His Century

By PAUL BERMAN

I.

IN 1987 I paid a visit to Pablo Antonio Cuadra at the offices of his newspaper, *La Prensa*, in Managua. It was not the absolutely lowest moment of Cuadra's life in politics—not as low as in 1937, when he was jailed by the first of the Somoza dictators, nor as low as in 1954, when he was returned to jail, nor as in 1956, when he was jailed for several months, nor as in 1978–1979, when his cousin was assassinated and the last of the Somozas dispatched mobs to attack the *Prensa* offices and even sent planes to bomb the building from the air. And yet, on the day when I called on him, life for Don Pablo Antonio could hardly have been described as good. The Sandinista National Liberation Front was in power, and once again *La Prensa* was trying to fend off an oppressive government. The Sandinistas ordered the paper closed. The Sandinistas, too, sent mobs to attack the offices. Bullets pocked the outside walls.

Cuadra was a co-director of the paper, and he had served in that position for more than thirty years, in conjunction with one or another of the Chamorro family, his cousins, who were the owners. Cuadra's role was senior sage, founder of the literary supplement, weekly columnist, head of the editorial page, sometimes editor-in-chief, and always chief prose stylist. Sometimes his role was simply to man the fort. The Sandinistas kept shutting the paper down, and Cuadra made a point, even so, of coming to the editorial offices on the North Highway and receiving visitors and telling them exactly what he thought, exactly as he would have done in print if the government had permitted. He received me on that basis—one more visiting journalist from New York.

He offered me a seat in a sparsely furnished office. Staring at the wall to my side, he expressed himself at length on the topic of the Sandinistas and their role in Nicaragua. He was not gentle. He had a long face in the shape of the capital letter I, with decisive-looking black eyeglasses forming the crossbeam at the top, and a sharp-trimmed white mustache forming the crossbeam below, and in the middle a nose as stiff and upright as a steel girder. Other people may bend, his nose seemed to say, but I do not.

The Sandinistas, he explained, were no Sandinistas at all. The real Sandino was a guerrilla general who led a nationalist rebellion against the United States Marines in the Nicaraguan mountains back in the 1920s and 1930s—which was only yesterday, from Cuadra's point of view. Very few Nicaraguan journalists and intellectuals had supported the real Sandino back in those times. But Cuadra, as a teenager and young man, was one of the few. He served his first spell in jail, in 1937, on a charge of putting up posters of Sandino, a subversive act. He must have been guilty, too, given that fifty years later he was still putting up posters of Sandino. A glassed and framed portrait of the guerrilla general stared down at him from the office wall even as he conducted his conversation with me, and that portrait expressed as subversive an attitude in 1987 as in 1937.

For who were the Sandinistas of the 1980s, from Cuadra's point of view? What did they know of the Nicaraguan past? They were impostors. They knew nothing. The Sandinistas claimed to be Christians. Cuadra described them as the enemies of Christianity. They claimed to be nationalists. He described them as the enemies of Nicaraguan culture. They claimed to be for freedom. He described them as the enemies of the dignity of the individual. They wanted to create a society of obedience. Not even the Somoza dictatorship had dreamed of such a thing.

BUT THE SANDINISTAS were not going to succeed. This was because, in Cuadra's account, the Nicaraguan people were naturally rebellious—a people accustomed to shouting out their opinions on every street corner, instead of keeping their voices low, as people do in, say, Guatemala. The Sandinistas were succeeding all too well at certain other projects, though. They were destroying a four-hundred-year-old tradition of cattle-raising, which had always been the heart of Nicaraguan life. "Cattle-raising is history," Cuadra once wrote, quoting his own grandparents. And the Sandinistas were ruining Nicaraguan poetry.

I interjected a question: weren't the Sandinistas poets themselves, some of them, anyway? They were famous all over the world for having made "the revolution of the poets." Cuadra bristled at the question. The best of Nicaragua's poets, the new young people, the ones with talent, had fled into exile, he said, to Texas. I mentioned Sergio Ramirez, the novelist, who was vice president in the Sandinista government. Cuadra seethed. He blamed Ramirez for engineering the deception that had brought Nicaragua into the hands of the Sandinistas.

I mumbled a few remarks to indicate that the United States bore a responsibility for Nicaragua's sufferings. Cuadra was in no mood to discuss America's crimes. He sneered at Americans who tremble with guilt over the United States' history in Latin America. American guilt was a psychological complex that he could not comprehend—not that he favored lining up with the United States in the cold

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war. Mostly he despised Fidel Castro. He loathed the cultural uniformity of the Communist bloc.

He sat behind his desk as stiff as an army colonel. His words crackled. I still have the notes of my discussion with him, but to capture his tone it would be better to quote a poem of his with the Orwellian title "1984," which was the year of its composition.

> I live in a country heartbroken
> by the cultivators of rifles.
> Everything is thought
> with the testicles. Above,
> foreheads covered yesterday with laurels,
> and imaginations, now empty
> and the eyes fixed on the gunsight.
> Homotextuals consult Marx.
> What says the seer
> about this surplus-value of cadavers?
> [. . .]
> My country of campesinos
> inhabited by soldiers. My country
> that used to boil with poems
> repeating slogans. . . .

He did worry about what the Sandinistas might do to him. The revolutionary leaders had frankly explained that killing *La Prensa*—and, by unstated extension, its editors—would cost the Sandinistas less than allowing the paper to go on hurling its insults. Cuadra was undaunted. Perhaps he enjoyed a psychological advantage over the Sandinistas. Quite a few of the top Sandinistas, the literary and intellectual ones at least, had been protégés of his at *La Prensa* during the Somoza dictatorship. He published their writings. He supported their underground activities. He accepted the notion of making socialist reforms in Nicaraguan life—though socialism, in his concept, was a strictly democratic system. But once the Sandinistas had taken power and had demonstrated a commitment to a very different concept of socialism, Cuban-style, he could only look at them with the infuriated disdain of a professor who thinks that his students have betrayed his teaching. Yield before those ignorant and ungrateful dogmatists? Bend before their authoritarian whim? No.

THE SANDINISTAS, FOR their part, treated Cuadra in a truly strange manner, or so it seemed to me. Some of the leaders did write poetry, and their writings were prominently on sale in the miserable few places where books could be bought in Nicaragua. Daniel Ortega's wife, Rosario Murillo, figured among Cuadra's protégés, and her own mediocre poetry was displayed for a while at what seemed like every one of those barren bookstores and kiosks. Cuadra's poetry, on the other hand, was almost impossible to find—though a good cheap edition, published in several volumes by still another of his cousins, was easily available across the border in Costa Rica.

The Sandinistas reviled him in public. And yet privately, and sometimes not so privately, they revered Cuadra. He was the enemy—and also the master of Nicaraguan verse, in a country where verse was king. He was the agent of imperialism—and a jewel of the national culture. The oppressor—and the one person whose good opinion every well-educated person seemed to crave. The whole situation was definitely a case for Dr. Freud. Even Tomás Borge, who ran the secret police, made a show of his ambivalence. Borge called Cuadra "the organic intellectual of the rich landowners," which was a Gramscian phrase that consigned Cuadra to the ash heap of history; and yet Borge's interior ministry published one of Cuadra's poems. Borge used to joke a little ominously that Cuadra's work might have to be removed from the poet's personal control and nationalized for the public good, as kept happening to any number of coffee plantations and cattle ranches.

The Sandinistas' ambivalence about Cuadra contributed to their undoing, I think. They dearly wanted to rid Nicaragua of *La Prensa* forever, but they could never quite muster the will to offend or to infuriate *La Prensa*'s foreign supporters—though the Sandinistas thought nothing of offending or infuriating foreign opinion on other issues. Secretly they must have worried about the fate of their own national culture if *La Prensa* and especially its literary supplement were eliminated. It was one of the oddities of the Sandinista time in power that, in the Sandinista newspapers, the weekly cultural supplements published fawning articles about Hollywood stars and American folk singers and other creatures of mass culture in the United States; but Cuadra's supplement, during the periods when the censors allowed him to publish anything at all, stuck resolutely to Hispanicist and highbrow themes. A reader might almost have concluded that, in cultural terms, the Sandinistas were the pro-Americans and Cuadra the anti-American. Finally the Sandinistas threw up their hands and allowed the paper back into print. And it was *La Prensa* and its editors and its principal owner, Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, who overthrew the Sandinistas in the election of 1990.

I think that, in modern times, there has never been a poet, a real poet, who has influenced events as forcefully as Pablo Antonio Cuadra did from his desk in Managua. To be sure, he exercised his influence partly as a newspaper editor and a political adviser, in a fairly conventional way, first in the overthrow of the Somoza dictatorship and then, eleven years later, in the overthrow of the Sandinistas. Strictly as a journalist, he deserves to be regarded as one of the greatest defenders of freedom of the press anywhere in the Americas. But mostly he exercised his influence as a poet—somebody who taught his readers, not just in Nicaragua, how to think and how to speak, with what ideas, expressed in what tone and at what rhythm. It was Cuadra, more than anyone else, who sowed and nurtured the modern idea of "Nicaraguaness"—sowed that idea in the early 1930s and watched over it ever after, until the thing had sprouted into leafy knots and tangles that were scarcely to be believed. Rather like Nicaragua itself.

II.

CUADRA WAS BORN in 1912 into an old conquistador family from Granada, a sweltering town of adobe walls and tile roofs and elegant porticoes—the kind of place where, for several hours a day, sunbeams smother the streets the way that snow blizzards do in colder climates, and reduce everything to silence. His father, Carlos Cuadra Pasos, was a government figure and a distinguished historian and memoirist, or at least he was regarded as such in his day, the early twentieth century. I have read a couple of Cuadra Pasos's books and have found them curious. His memoirs are dominated by a morbid fascination with funerals—the funerals of family members, of statesmen, and even of people he hardly knew. Cuadra Pasos seems to have spent half his life attending those events.

Some of the funerals were rather odd. At the service for his mother, his father's cadaver, buried many years before, was dug up and was revealed to be in perfect embalmed condition. He attended the funeral of a dog. In 1916, Cuadra Pasos visited the poet Rubén Darío, the master of Symbolism, on his sickbed, and in due course attended Darío's funeral, too. The funeral was strange because, when the great poet died, his brain was removed from his skull in order to discover, if at all possible, the secret of his genius; but in the confusion and the excitement of the autopsy, the brain was misplaced and disappeared. Cuadra Pasos found Darío's funeral very moving.

Pablo Antonio was four years old when Darío died, and he grew up in an atmosphere that must have been saturated unto nausea with the late poet's deeds and writings. Even today the cult of Darío is vast and more than a little obsessive in Nicaragua—it is a kind of charming madness, a national idiosyncrasy; and the

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intensity of that cult in the first years after his death can only be imagined. By the time Pablo Antonio was sixteen, at an age when other boys join street gangs, he and his friends in Granada organized instead a literary movement, the Vanguard, which in English-language terminology was like calling themselves the Modernists. They held their meetings at siesta time in the bell tower of the church of La Merced, where Pablo Antonio's father had attended so many fascinating funerals.

They were quite a sophisticated and cosmopolitan group, which may be hard to picture in a provincial Central American town; but Granada was, in those years, a natural home for high culture. The Jesuits had been thrown out of Mexico by the Mexican Revolution and had set up a college in Granada, and Pablo Antonio and some of the other young writers in his group studied there, under professors who came from France and Italy. A couple of the young Granadino poets went abroad and came home bearing news of the latest in literature and art from France (Cocteau, Apollinaire, Claudel) and the United States (Whitman, Amy Lowell and "imagism," Pound). And by 1930 little Granada, in its sophistication, had blossomed into a center of the avant-garde.

The boys in the bell tower proclaimed themselves "The Nicaraguan Anti-Academy." They drew up a manifesto, which was written by Pablo Antonio, calling for a review, banquets, and a theater. They were mischievous. They announced an intention to conquer public attention "by means of artistic coups d'etat, intellectual scandal, aggressive criticism, literary battle, impudent exhibition of modern art, accusation against sterility, anemia, malaria, and other infirmities of academic literature." They rented a café for their proposed new Café of the Arts and drew up a menu starting with "Cocktail Cocteau," but the café owner, having noticed their decorations, threw them out. "Cubism," Cuadra recalled many years later, "had lost its first battle in Nicaragua." They took over a page of Granada's Sunday newspaper, *El Correo*, and made it their own, the "Vanguard Corner."

And all of that, the mischief and the energy and the ambition, pointed in a single direction, inevitable for any young Nicaraguan writer, which was away from the fanatical cult of Rubén Darío—away from Darío's abstractions, his mysticism, his preference for the formal and the imaginary over the real, his Castilian sonority of o's and a's, his loftiness. Cuadra's first important book, *Nicaraguan Poems*—the book that made his reputation—began with a declaration of intent:

> It is necessary to return
> to the source of song:
> to find the poetry in everyday things,
> to sing for anyone at all
> with the ordinary tone
> that we use in love

That was precisely what Darío had never wanted to do (except when, in his protean energy, he did). The new tone was natural, fresh, authentic, and conversational—a tone that was jeering and tender by turns.

Having identified his goal at a very young age, Cuadra set about researching the local reality—the Nicaraguan landscape that was likewise missing from Darío's verse (except in a handful of poems), the scenes of farm life, rural customs, and Indian legends. Darío had called in his several nationalist poems for a mestizo poetry, for a conjuring of Latin America's ancient Indian past, yet he made no great effort to conjure any such thing himself, apart from throwing around a few Indian names. But Cuadra applied himself diligently to the task. He was a poet-anthropologist. He sailed around Lake Nicaragua, studying the Indian ceramics and collecting legends and observing the local forms of speech.

There was an old Chorotega custom of composing love poems for birds, and Cuadra followed something of that custom in the very earliest of his books, *Songs of Bird and Lady*. And when, in 1933, he finally produced *Nicaraguan Poems*, he brought together each of those separate elements, the tender and conversational tone, the anthropological research, the local observations, to evoke what anyone could see at a glance was an entire world. It was a lyrical world of imagined village life in rural Nicaragua—a world of Catholic sorrow and yearnings, of Indian memories and pathos and tranquillity, presented sometimes with an austere sharpness and sometimes with a slight catch in the throat, as if sung by a French tenor. Sometimes he was ecstatic.

He rode horseback at night—the daytime is much too hot—across the cattle trails, dreaming of Jesus. In his imaginings, the horsemen of Nicaragua went galloping toward the Light of God while dark-complexioned women purified their faces in the river. He composed hymns and psalms in a style not unlike Eliot's "Ash-Wednesday"—solemn, uplifted, Christian in a voice that was his own, not that of the Church. He wrote paeans to romantic death. In one of his poems, a horse bearing a dead cowboy, strapped into place by his comrades and sent to the burial site, canters through the night, like Washington Irving's headless horseman or García Lorca's horsemen of the dead on the roads of Andalusia. He drew scenes of tropical horror:

> The jaguar's cadaver dreams of its
> final rapine
> and in the little cold and blue sky
> that its pupil surveys
> insomniac vultures tie black circles
> over the bones of the cow of the moon

And, still not satisfied, he threw in one more note of strangeness and horror. It was a glimpse of the weirdest of anomalies of Nicaraguan life during the 1920s and 1930s, the oddest of tropical jungle horrors, namely, the presence of the U.S. Marines. One of the strongest of the *Nicaraguan Poems* was "Poem of the Foreign Moment in the Jungle," written for a narrator who might be the earliest man,

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Pablo Antonio Cuadra in Teotihuacán, Mexico, 1947

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together with a Greek chorus of campesinos and guerrillas hiding in the leafage. Cuadra's poem conjured mountains, flint stones, mangroves, serpents, boa constrictors, swamps, the moon, and an obsidian black tiger with a phosphorescent eye. And also,

> In the marrow of the wood
> 500 North Americans!

The Marines are attacked by clouds of mosquitos, by the damp and the swamp. They flee—delirious, malarial, dying:

> under the boiling silence of the
> mangroves
> their white bones delicately polished
> by the ants

It is odd to think that the same poet who impatiently shook his head in 1987 over my modest display of gringo regret for certain U.S. policies in Latin America would have written such a poem in the 1930s. But it may be that, just as the young Sandinista revolutionaries of the 1980s were of two minds about Cuadra as their elder, Cuadra himself in the 1930s was of two minds about his own elders, and especially about his father—whose first instinct was to look with sympathy on the Marine occupation, in the hope, which turned out to be vain, that foreign peacekeepers might do Nicaragua a bit of good.

III.

CUADRA'S POETRY WENT through several stages—a phase of cattleman rusticity out of Hesiod, and a phase of Catholic contemplation:

> Love is in the end a different love—
> and we lose it!
> The world is finally a different world—
> and we search for it!

But the most remarkable aspect of his poetry (and of his essays and his folktales, too, not to mention his woodcuts) came from his continuing researches into Nicaraguan anthropology and the Indian past: his studies in the Nicaraguan national character.

He never worked up these writings in a systematic fashion, at least not on a scale that could be compared to Octavio Paz's study of Mexico's national character, *The Labyrinth of Solitude*. Still, he did outline a few national traits. He pointed to the old Hispanic formalities of city architecture, with the streets radiating outward from the church and the plaza, and he noted how strictly the old-fashioned Nicaraguan towns followed those forms. He noted how austerely the Nicaraguans dress. And he deduced a quality that he denominated with the word *sobriety*, a trait that plainly distinguished Nicaragua from the colors and the tipsy exuberance of a culture like Mexico's.

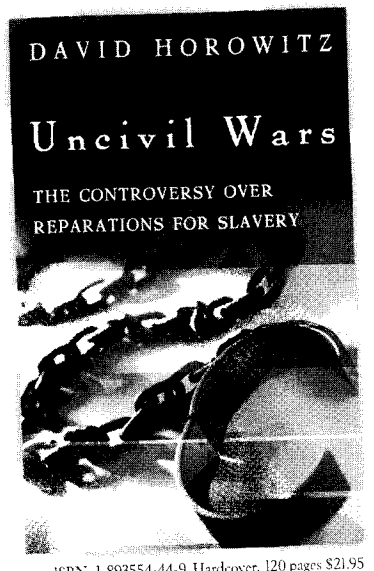
He remarked upon the migrations of the Chorotega and Nahua Indians, who originally settled the land. He noted that a spirit of migration never afterward disappeared, as shown in the sacred processional rites of the Chorotegas, and, from the period after the Spaniards arrived, the processional rites of the Nicaraguan Church. And he deduced a quality that he denominated as *transience*. It was because of the transient quality of Nicaraguan life, Cuadra wrote, that Nicaraguans have sometimes been called "the Chinese of Central America" or even "the Jews of the isthmus."

He noted that transience is, by nature, a tragic quality—as is every one of the Nicaraguan traits, in his depiction. The procession, the voyage, the migration—these things, in Nicaragua, are pretty much fated to arrive at any destination but a happy one. The true national epic, in Cuadra's judgment, was *Robinson Crusoe*, a frightening tale. Defoe is said to have drawn his story from a Scottish sailor who cast up on a deserted isle in 1705, but Cuadra, citing an entry in the *Encyclopédie Larousse* to the contrary, insisted that Defoe's story came from a Nicaraguan sailor, a Miskito Indian, who cast up on a Caribbean island in 1680. "All Nicaraguans," Cuadra wrote, "if they consult their hearts, know it: Robinson Crusoe was a Nicaraguan. Robinsonism is our temptation and our danger."

He noted a reality of Nicaraguan geography. Nicaragua occupies the exact spot where, via the Río San Juan and Lake Nicaragua, the Atlantic and the Pacific come closest to meeting. Nicaragua is where North America's geography bumps up against South America's, and where the vegetation of the north runs into the vegetation of the south. Nicaragua, because it is dominated by volcanoes and lakes, is the meeting place of fire and water. And these facts of geography and vegetation reflected, in his interpretation, a metaphysical quality. It was *duality*. This was the quality that the ancient Chorotegas evoked in their sculptures, the man-beasts, human bodies with animal heads. Then came the Spaniards, and duality became a social fact as well. Nicaragua was born of the meeting of two peoples, Indians and Spaniards. A mestizo country, which is to say, a double country.

Duality led to the most astonishing entry in Cuadra's catalogue of national characteristics—a characteristic that could be described only historically, beginning with Columbus. It was Columbus himself,

A Bad Idea Whose Time Has Come



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as Cuadra pointed out, who discovered Nicaragua. The explorer was seeking the Doubtful Strait of legend, on the way to the Grand Khan. He was searching, that is, for global unity. But in stumbling on Nicaragua, he at last intuited that he had discovered instead a New World, not just a series of islands. It was Nicaragua, Cuadra believed, that gave the name "America" to the Western Hemisphere. Columbus, at least in Cuadra's account, asked the Indians what their land was called; they said "Amerric," and the name was adopted by Vespucci, the cartographer who baptized the New World.

The Spaniards chose Nicaragua as the center of their New World empire. From Nicaragua came Pizarro's army to suppress the Inca revolt of the Peruvians. In Nicaragua came, in 1550, the first attempt to create America's independence, in a revolt at León by the Contreras brothers and their "Army of Liberty." It was in Nicaragua, centuries later, that United States imperialism, "the stock-market Eagle," dug its claws most violently into Latin America. And it was in Nicaragua's Segovian mountains that César Augusto Sandino—his very name evoked the universal grandeur of Rome—raised the banner of liberty for all of Hispano-America. It was Nicaragua, in the person of Rubén Darío, who rescued the world of Castilian letters from the slumber of centuries.

For what was Nicaragua? It was not a petty nation like other nations. Nicaragua's destiny—a "fatal destiny, sometimes grandiose, sometimes as cruel and obsessive as a Greek tragedy"—was large. Nicaragua was the *umbilicus mundi* of the West. It was the eye in the American needle. It was the pointer on the hemispheric scale. It was the throat between the Americas. It was an imperium. For there are nations of the particular and nations of the universal. The Roman Empire was a universal nation, and likewise the United States and France, because of their cultures and their revolutions. And among the universal nations stands tiny Nicaragua. *Universality*—the last and most dangerous of Nicaragua's traits, the drunken end point of a sober nation doomed to ambivalent wanderings.

WITH THOSE NATIONAL traits in mind, Cuadra set out to write a Nicaraguan mythology of his own, an invented mythology, which reached back to Sandino and even further to the medieval Spanish novels of knight errantry, and still further back to the Aztec gods and the beginning of time. (The Nahuatl-speaking peoples of Nicaragua were distant cousins of the Mexican Aztecs.) He wrote about eyeless jaguars sinuous with murder. His images were night, moonrise, hawks, green tropical jungles, Indian footprints, vomiting volcanoes, freshwater sharks, blood on Lake Nicaragua, together with etymological hints from the Nahuatl, Mangue, and Chorotega languages, all of it tied together with surrealist illogic (though he did not consider himself a Surrealist).

Cuadra's poem of Nicaraguan history, "September: The Shark," offers a vivid example. I cite it because, at the conclusion of my interview with him, Cuadra went behind his desk to retrieve a back issue of one of his literary reviews, *The Fish and the Serpent* (which had also been suppressed), and he put it into my hands with the injunction to study this poem. "September: The Shark" begins with an italicized description of Nicaragua at the beginning of time:

The speakers of the Mangue language
believed that the Night,
still a maiden, stumbled while carrying
the amphora of the moon. And she spilled
those pallid, fresh
waters where the child that I was
peers from my eyes
and reads without tiring the archaic
hymn
of the waves—in the Beginning
was the verse—waves: stanzas
for unknown languages, rhythms
that molded the labyrinth
of the ear like a seashell.
A child returns to the womb. Returns
an in-
fant to air wept by fish: humid birds
without song,
and feathers hardened by the purest
cruelty.
Here
death has laid from the beginning
its unending silence. Here
the sinister fin—in the blade of the moon
rips the smooth surface of genesis

The feeling of a beginning, of the world in its earliest phase, of civilization just beginning to arise—that was perhaps his strangest and most idiosyncratic note, a note of wildness and of the unconscious.

BY HITTING THAT note, Cuadra returned to a very old idea in the history of modern poetry. It was the inspiration that had set Rubén Darío ablaze as a young man—the inspiration that was originally Victor Hugo's, to compose a world history in verse and legend, beginning at the beginning. Hugo wrote a set of poems about a sailor named Canaris, who sails the Aegean during the Greco-Turkish wars of the 1820s; and Cuadra wrote a set of poems about a sailor named Cifar, who sails Lake Nicaragua in a primeval age:

Cifar, in his dream, heard the shouts
and the ululating seashells in the fog
at dawn. He watched the boat
—immobile—
fixed between waves.
—If you hear
in the dark
middle of the night
—in high waters—
shouts that ask
about the port:
turn the rudder
and flee
Outlined in the foam,
the hull, dark and gnawed,
(—"Sailor!" they were shouting—)
the broken rigging
rocking and the sails
black and rotten
(—"Sailor!"—)
Standing up, Cifar embraced the mast

—If the moon
illuminates their faces
ashen and bearded
If they ask you
—"Sailor, where are we going?"
If they implore you:
—"Sailor, show us
the port!"
turn the rudder
and flee!

They set sail a long time ago
They are navigating in the dream
centuries ago

These are your own questions
lost in time.

And when, precisely, was that primeval age, lost in time? It was an age when the dewy air was trembly with expectation, and a terrifying future seemed about to dawn, a Homeric age in a Central American Aegean:

Everything seems Greek. The old Lake
and its hexameters. The unknown
islands and your beautiful head
—of marble—
mutilated by the night.

Neruda, too, adopted the Hugolian idea of writing a history of the world, except that he narrowed it down to Latin America. And Cuadra narrowed it down still further—narrowed it down, first, by writing his grand mythology mostly in fragmentary versions, and, second, by confining himself to a Nicaragua whose entire population even now comprises only some four million people. Instead of a *Canto General*, a *Canto Particular*, minutely focused.

And yet Cuadra's tiny focus hinted at something grandiose, even at some-

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thing biblical—a suggestion, never openly stated, that he was composing a new sacred book, the mytho-Bible of his own tiny country. On this point, too, Cuadra returned to Darío, whose very titles—*Prosas Profanas*, *Cantos de Vida y Esperanza*—gave off a scent of the sacred. And so, in the end, Pablo Antonio turned back to what he had originally rejected—to the man whose funeral his father had attended, to Nicaragua's greatest poet. The father, rejected; and the father, embraced.

In his biblical vein, Cuadra turned back also to the millenarianism that was sometimes Darío's—to the wild tone of anticipation of a gigantic and mysterious new event. Only what was that impending event going to be, in its immensity? The return of Jesus, the redemption of mankind? The rise of civilization? The social revolution? Rubén Darío, the sphinx, never spelled out what he had in mind. Poetry and the occult were, to Darío, one and the same. But Cuadra was not a sphinx, and sometimes he spelled out his own thinking all too clearly.

Millenarianism—one more Nicaraguan trait, the most tragic of all.

IV.

CUADRA'S POETICS WERE a politics, too, at least in his early years. And the politics, like the poetics, began where Darío left off.

Darío's nationalist thundering bore the mark of Victor Hugo—the mark of the French Revolution and of nineteenth-century liberalism's faith in reason. And yet, after a while, Darío came to look a little skeptically on the liberal faith, and wanted to uphold Hispanic tradition too, and even to bow respectfully to the Spanish Empire. Yet what could a Hispanic resurgence possibly mean if it was going to mix the liberalism of the nineteenth century with a few not necessarily liberal ideas? Darío felt no need to answer that question. But Cuadra and the young men in the bell tower in Nicaragua's Granada in the 1920s and early 1930s came up with an answer of their own.

Darío drew his inspirations from the French avant-garde of his time, and Cuadra and the Granadino poets, in thinking about a Hispanic resurgence, did the same. They studied Charles Maurras, the theorist of the French monarchist and anti-Semitic ultra-right. *Action Française*, Maurras's journal, was their guide, together with its sister *Acción Española* and a few thinkers of the ultra-right in Spain. And the Granadino poets proposed a novel doctrine of their own, which Cuadra expounded with gusto in a series of essays in *Lectura* magazine in Mexico, in *Acción Española* in Madrid, in *Imperio* magazine in Rome, and a few other journals of the 1930s.

Latin America's fatal error, in Cuadra's exposition, was to have exited the Spanish Empire. Instead of clinging to the durable structures of what he called "classical politics"—the politics of Catholic faith and hierarchical loyalty—the feeble new Latin American republics, having achieved their own independence, took up liberalism and democracy, and worshipped at those shrines for a hundred years. And what did the hundred years achieve? By the early twentieth century, the United States was pressing down upon Latin America—militarily, economically, even culturally. The Latin American republics were unable to resist. The situation was appalling.

For what was the United States? It was the product of Protestant irrationalism, of individualism, of materialism. It was, as Cuadra put it in one of his early essays, a society "whose racist nationality is based on the most complete extermination of the native Indian and on the most anti-Christian contempt for the Negro." Then, too, the Latin American republics were under threat from what he called the "Moscovite savagery" of the Communist International—a savagery that represented, philosophically speaking, still another offshoot of the old nineteenth-century liberalism.

LATIN AMERICA COULD escape those terrible modern dangers only by following the path of antiquity. A return to the values, the ideas, and the faith of centuries ago: this was the only hope. The whole purpose of Cuadra's poetry was to evoke and to define those ancient traits. That was his reason for conducting anthropological researches into the Indians of Nicaragua, and that was his reason for writing a verse mythology of Nicaragua. He did not write in a spirit of nostalgia. He wrote in a crusader spirit of militant zeal. He was trying to chart a possible future.

And what, exactly, were the values of the past? Indigenism—the cult of the pre-Columbian Indians—was in his eyes a fake, and doubly so if its purpose was to help the surviving Indian populations in any practical way. Indigenism, as he judged it, was a manipulation either by Marxists or, more powerfully, by populists. Cuadra was apoplectic about the Mexican Revolution. He figured that, in trying to resurrect the Indian past, the Mexican revolutionaries had reverted to barbarism pure and simple. He hurled the word "cannibalism" at the Mexican Revolution and its governing party. It was the kind of insult that he must have heard at the Jesuit college in Granada. For indigenism, whether Marxist or populist, was the enemy of Catholicism. Indigenism was paganism, and there was its error. The true and vigorous roots that had once given strength and dignity to the Hispanic world were Catholic—roots that reached back to Roman times and even earlier, into the age of Homer.

The road that Latin America needed to follow led, therefore, to the cross and the sword, to the days of conquistador strength and faith, which meant the Spanish Empire in its era of greatness in the Americas, the empire that was Spanish and Indian both, a mestizo empire. It was possible to find that road, too. Benito Mussolini had already pointed the way in the march on Rome in 1922. The road consisted of combat and ferocity and the spirit of what Cuadra proudly called "fanaticism" in an essay frankly titled "In Defense of Fanaticism."

"WE ARE FASCISTS," Cuadra said quite plainly. He said it in a radio speech from Managua in 1938, on the sixteenth anniversary of the march on Rome. "We are fascists in order to go meet our future. We are fascists in order to struggle for our nationalities threatened by Marxist or capitalist imperialisms. Fascists in order to struggle for our nationalities in the supreme ideal of glorifying them and aggrandizing them and Christianizing them. Fascists in our will to organize our disorganized lands in their Truth and their Tradition, using even violence against those who oppose our resurgence with their uncomprehending stupidity. Fascists in our irrevocable decision to raise up once again, above the brotherhood and union of twenty republics, the Imperial power of Hispanicness."

This was not exactly Mussolini-style fascism, though Cuadra respected Mussolini and the Italians for having discovered the true road. It was definitely not Nazism. The Germans, in Cuadra's estimation, had drawn on fascist inspirations, which he thought was admirable, but they had watered down their fascist ideals with a kind of materialism and even a touch of Marxism, and with a pointless mythology of race. In Cuadra's view, the true fascism, the highest form of all, was the fascism of the Spanish Falange—the most Catholic of fascisms. It was the fascism of the conquistadors. That sort of fascism, the fanaticism of the sword and the cross, was a world force, he thought. It was destined to dictate what he called "Christian norms of international conduct to the universe, just as, until now, the Masonic, Jewish, and Soviet internationals have dictated."

"Christian norms" meant the triumph of Christian humanism, which could be achieved only by recognizing the divine

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in man, as Christianity does, and as materialist philosophies do not. "Christian norms" meant the victory of man over things. A new era of world history—a modern age that, from another point of view, would resurrect the Middle Ages. In Cuadra's idea, Spain and Spanish America, the mother and her children, were going to bring the new era into being—just as Darío had suggested in his nationalist poems. For when Cuadra wanted to strike his deepest note, he quoted Darío's picture of Spain and Spanish America reunited:

> One continent and the other
> renovating the old ancestries,
> In spirit united, in spirit and yearning
> and language,
> They see the moment coming when
> new hymns will have to be sung.
> The Latin stock will see the great future
> dawn....

V.

CUADRA AND THE Granadino poets waged two ideological campaigns in Nicaragua, and the first of those campaigns was on behalf of General Sandino. For who was going to lead the Latin stock to the future dawn? It was going to be the guerrilla hero in the Segovian mountains. Unfortunately, in 1934, with the Marines gone from Nicaragua, Sandino was lured into Managua for peace negotiations and was treacherously assassinated on orders of the chief of the National Guard, Anastasio Somoza García. The Granadino poets felt badly about that; but then, recovering from their grief with remarkable speed, they recognized that Sandino's death did at least demonstrate that somewhere in Nicaragua a truly strong and decisive leader was definitely to be found. It was Somoza.

And so, in a spectacular bit of political flip-floppery, the poets veered from Sandino to Somoza, from the victim to his betrayer. And the poets launched their second campaign, which was to agitate for a new march on Rome, in a Nicaraguan version: a coup by Anastasio Somoza to overthrow Nicaragua's elected government. The poets helped to organize a movement called the Blue Shirts, and the Blue Shirts fought in the streets of Granada, León, and finally Managua. They vandalized an anti-Somoza newspaper called *La Tribuna*—which was quite an ironic thing for Cuadra to have done in his foolish youth.

In 1937, Somoza made his move, deposed the constitutional president, and took the government of Nicaragua into his own strong and decisive hands. The poets in the bell tower became poets in power. (The tradition of poets occupying high positions in Nicaraguan government, far from having begun with the Sandinistas, started with Darío himself, who was Nicaragua's ambassador to Spain during a period of Liberal Party dictatorship at the start of the twentieth century.) Some of the Granadino poets served the Somoza dynasty for decades. Cuadra's friend José Coronel Urtecho, the intellectual leader of the group, insisted as late as 1976 that nothing was incompatible in admiring both General Sandino and General Somoza.

Yet Cuadra responded to the coup in 1937 rather differently. He noticed in a matter of months that Somoza was not, in fact, the virtuous hero of the sword and the cross called for by the fantasist doctrines of the fascist imagination. Somoza was a gangster. That was why Cuadra, in his outrage, ran around putting up posters of Sandino and got himself jailed. Two years after the coup, he went to Spain and, according to the French scholar Jean-Louis Felz (in his Sorbonne thesis *L'Oeuvre de Pablo Antonio Cuadra*), somehow arranged an interview with Generalissimo Franco himself and asked for arms to overthrow the gangster-dictator back home.

Franco was much too shrewd for that. And Cuadra, after a brief return to Nicaragua (where he and Coronel Urtecho were formally accused of Axis sympathies, a serious legal problem), fled to Mexico, where he had allies. In Mexico, though, he began to entertain second thoughts about his entire political project. I do not know precisely what caused his change of heart. In 1993 he published an autobiographical poem called "*Memorias/La Tribu*" in *Vuelta*, Octavio Paz's magazine in Mexico. (Cuadra was on the masthead—a distinct honor for a Central American poet.) The poem recalled how, in Mexico, he fell under the influence of José Vasconcelos, one of the greatest of the Latin American intellectuals, who also happened to be an admirer of Hitler. Vasconcelos rethought his own allegiances, though, and in his new frame of mind he asked his Nicaraguan friend, according to the poem, "How did you put your hopes in a Generalissimo?" And Cuadra gave up the fascist idea.

HE STILL CONSIDERED himself a Christian humanist, only now in a variety that was sincerely and genuinely democratic. Everything that he did after he went back to Nicaragua and took a job at *La Prensa*—every political position that he adopted, every risk that he accepted—reflected his new anti-dictatorial and democratic attitude. Perhaps in giving up on fascism he had merely returned to the politics of his father, which were Catholic, Conservative (in the Nicaraguan sense of the Conservative Party of Granada), and legal. Pablo Antonio never fully explained his democratic turn-around—not in any version that made its way into his better-known or well-remembered writings today, at least to my knowledge. On the contrary, his main temptation in later years was to acknowledge having made a few serious errors when he was young, and then to downplay the entire episode.

Sometimes he claimed merely to have fallen for a while under fascism's influence, which was not quite the same as having announced over the radio that "we are fascists." Sometimes he blamed his errors on Coronel, the pied piper, and made himself seem an innocent led astray. (Coronel did the same. He claimed not to have been present when the mania for fascism swept away the Granadino poets.) Everything that I have just quoted from Cuadra's fascist period comes from a book of his called *Brevario Imperial*, which was brought out by *Acción Español* in Madrid in 1940. But that book tended to disappear in later times, such that in bibliographies of his principal writings, *Brevario Imperial* is sometimes mentioned and sometimes not. (No mention of it appears in the bibliographies of two of the principal collections of Cuadra's verse in English translation, one by Grace Schulman and Ann McCarthy de Zavala and the other by Steven White, America's principal authority on Nicaraguan poetry—worthy volumes, I should add, from which I have learned a great deal.) The New York Public Library kept a rare copy of *Brevario Imperial* on its shelves until 1999, but then, as a matter of housecleaning, got rid of the volume and replaced it with a mere microfilm, which is how I came to read the book.

To be sure, anyone can sympathize with Cuadra's wish to keep these things out of the public eye. He was ashamed. He was angry at himself for having devoted so much of his time to politics, and in later years he said so, too—though he was reluctant to specify what he meant by "politics." Still, he might have done some good by discussing his fascism in detail, and explaining why he finally repudiated it. After all, his achievements as a writer of poetic and nationalist mythologies were enormous. The mestizo note in Nicaraguan nationalism, the mythic prestige of Sandino and of guerrilla warriors in the mountains, the grandiosity of Nicaragua's national aspirations (a grandiosity that I think is shared by no other country of equivalent size), the touch of millenarianism in the revolutionary nationalist idea—all of this was, in large degree, his own creation. All of it drew on his early political commitments, as anyone can see with a peek at *Brevario Imperial*. And the whole set of his ideas turned out to be immensely powerful, sufficiently to cap-

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ture the imagination of the entire world in the 1970s and 1980s—not in the ultra-rightist version that had been his own, of course, but in an ultra-leftist Catholic and Marxist version that was fashioned by yet another of his relatives, the priest and poet Ernesto Cardenal, who served as the Sandinista minister of culture; and by a handful of other writers, the theorists of *Sandinismo*.

I WONDER IF a few serious reflections on Cuadra's part might not have shed some light on the political dangers of a poetic mythology such as his own. He might have been able to explain to his readers what kind of society he was dreaming of in those poems, and why his dream society might be less than desirable in real life. In one of the poems in *Canto Temporal*, he wrote, "I wanted an order like a gigantic column"—meaning an orderly society, everyone in his proper place, from the king to the workers, each person serene and beatific in a Hellenized Catholic world. A few democratic-minded comments about that idea might have helped his left-wing heirs in later generations recognize that they too were dreaming of gigantic columns, though the king in their version ended up being called the "National Directorate." He might have helped his readers recognize a few significant ways in which Nicaraguan leftism, when it finally came to power in the days of Ortega and Castro, oddly resembled Nicaraguan ultra-rightism, as yearned for by the Granadino poets in the days of Mussolini and Franco.

Then again, I can imagine that Cuadra's first impulse, once he had taken up democracy, was to rescue his own poetry from the taint of any politics at all. For what would have happened to the poetry if he had made a fuss over his early political views and how they had changed? He might have become famous and even admired for having rethought his politics, but a notoriety would have attached to his poetry as well, which would have been a pity from a literary point of view. The poems do have a life apart from the ideological doctrines that helped inspire them. He did not become a worse poet when he became a better political thinker. Nor was there any reason for Cuadra in later life to go rummaging through his earlier poems looking for scandalous or hateful passages to expunge. There was nothing in the poetry to be embarrassed about, so far as I know. The *Cantos* of Pablo Antonio Cuadra were not the *Cantos* of Ezra Pound.

Pablo Antonio Cuadra died on January 2 of this year, at the age of eighty-nine. It is a time for mourning, and for evaluation. He was, he is, a great poet—on a small scale, if such a distinction can be made. He never possessed the robust energy of Darío. The fragmentary quality of some of his writings and the lapses into Catholic sentimentality are his principal limitations. But his solemnity, the hint of something wild and savage, the obsidian sharpness of his images, his instinct for violence: these elements and moods are extremely powerful. I suppose that his national theme, in its geographical smallness, may have restricted his popular appeal in other parts of the world. But his great goal of seeking out a mestizo sense of the past, the goal of defining a modern age that sits atop a forgotten Indian civilization, the goal of inventing a sense of place and identity out of shards from long ago and out of sheer will and his own religious soul—all of that was large, not small. Cuadra's attention to those concerns was perhaps comparable to Paz's, except that he enjoyed an advantage that Paz did not—the advantage, as it seems to my own non-Catholic sensibility, of a Catholic warmth, which rescues Cuadra from the aridities of Aztec calendars and gods that turned to stone ages ago.

Certainly Cuadra enjoys an advantage over the writers from the United States who, in their own day, by which I mean the nineteenth century, likewise wanted to invent a national mythology with a more than European origin. The American mythologists—Longfellow, Whittier, Cooper, Thoreau, Parkman, and a few others—were people of talent, sometimes of genius, and were serious about researching the Indian past. But Cuadra's advantage over those writers is obvious, I think, to anyone who glances at his writings and at their writings today. It is an overwhelming advantage, and it consists of a single, unmistakable quality: modernity. ■

Assent and Lamentation

By RUTH FRANKLIN

Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage by Alice Munro

(Alfred A. Knopf, 323 pp., $24)

THE SHORT STORY is the single mother of the literary family. No matter how hard it strives or how many esteemed advocates it summons, its detractors will never be convinced that it deserves the moral legitimacy of the novel. Even in the case of Alice Munro, who has produced ten consistently distinguished volumes of stories over the past thirty years, the acclaim acquires a strange aftertaste as it piles up. She is "Canada's greatest writer of short fiction"—but how many other Canadian short-story writers can you name? "One of the best short-story writers alive," or "perhaps the best short-story writer of our time"—does that make her, then, one of the best writers, period? One reviewer just came out and said what all were thinking: "Alice Munro should write a novel."

Actually Alice Munro has written a novel, but that is not the point. She, too, says that she prefers the novel to the short story, and she says this in, of all places, the preface to her *Selected Stories*, which serves as an introduction to more than six hundred pages' worth of exceptional work:

> I did not "choose" to write short stories. I hoped to write novels. When you are responsible for running a house and taking care of small children, particularly in the days before disposable diapers or ubiquitous automatic washing machines, it's hard to arrange for large chunks of time. . . . You're better to stick with something you can keep in mind and hope to do in a few weeks, or a couple of months at most.

These lines, and the homely directness with which they are delivered, will sound familiar to anyone who knows Munro's fiction, in which women are often put upon to make choices that are not choices at all. For an *ars poetica*, though, the passage expresses a stunning amount of resignation. And for all its plainspokenness, there is something in this confession that feels false. Whatever the demands of diapers and laundry, it hardly needs pointing out that for many women they have not proved an insurmountable obstacle to sustained achievement. Why

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could Munro not instead unburden herself of the cult of the novel, and reject the anxiety, the feeling of inadequacy or illegitimacy, that it imposes on the practitioners of other forms? Beauty and wisdom, after all, come in many forms, even in many fictional forms.

Happily, Munro's fiction shows her to be as much engaged with transcending life's obstacles as she is with chronicling them. And the next few paragraphs of her preface offer a vindication of sorts. She describes herself, fifteen years old, standing at the window of the public library, looking down upon the town scales. A team of horses, pulling a sleigh, moves onto the scales, as snow falls around them. That's it. But the scene is "alive and potent, and it gave me something like a blow to the chest," she writes. "The man and the horses are not symbolic or picturesque, they are moving through a story which is hidden, and now, for a moment, carelessly revealed. How can you get your finger on it, feel that life beating?"

Munro focuses on that life beating with the intensity of a microscope, and she writes until she has exhausted all its possibilities. Even if she did not "choose" to write short stories, her stumble into them is certainly a happy accident, because the short story is the form that accords most exactly with the way she views the world: as a collection of images, such as the horses on the scale, that reveal something of the lives around them. Her single novel, *Lives of Girls and Women* (1971), has the verisimilitude of her stories but not their tight control, their sense that nothing has been left out. This "novel" is no different in form from *The Beggar Maid*, the collection of "linked stories" that came a few years later; and yet the later book—which covers far more emotional ground than the novel, following a single character through ten stories, from childhood to middle age—is one of Munro's most accomplished. It is as if Munro, nodding ruefully to her critics, felt that she ought to write a novel, and once it was over with she could shamelessly get back to what she does best. The shame is that they are still trying to force it upon her.

Other Hand

The lesser twin,
The one whose accomplishments
And privileges are unshowy: getting to touch
The tattoo on my right shoulder.
Wearing the mitt.

I feel its familiar weight and textures
As the adroit one rests against it for a moment.
They twine fingers.

Lefty continues to experience considerable
Difficulty expressing himself clearly
And correctly in writing.

Comparison with his brother prevents him
From putting forth his best effort.

Yet this halt one too has felt a breast, thigh,
Clasped an ankle or most intimate
Of all, the fingers of a hand.

And possibly his trembling touch,
As less merely adept and confident,
Is subtly the more welcome of the two.

In the Elysian Fields, where every defect
Will be compensated and the last
Will be first, this one will lead skillfully
While the other will assist.

And as my shadow stalks that underworld
The right hand too will rejoice—released
From its long burden of expectation:
The yoke of dexterity finally laid to rest.

Robert Pinsky

YOU MIGHT CALL the title story of Munro's newest collection "novelistic," if that word did not suggest that the repetition of patterns and symbols, and the use of multiple perspectives, and the convolutions of plot, and the gradual development of characters, are exclusively the novel's purview. Johanna Parry, housekeeper to the elderly Mr. McCauley and his granddaughter Sabitha, suddenly hops a train to Saskatchewan, taking with her a set of furniture that belongs to Ken Boudreau, Sabitha's deadbeat father. Johanna has fallen in love with him after receiving a series of increasingly romantic letters that she believes to be from him; the letters, however, were written by Sabitha and her friend Edith as a joke. Ken Boudreau is perennially in debt, an itinerant, and a womanizer; the stolid Johanna seems an unlikely match for him. But when she arrives, she finds him collapsed with bronchitis, the hotel he is running in disrepair. In the wreckage of his life, Johanna's patient take-charge attitude is comforting, as is the bankbook balance he discovers while snooping in her purse. Johanna, for her part, is not disappointed to find such a desperate character in place of the romancer of the letters. "Her heart had been dry, and she had considered it might always be so. And now such a warm commotion, such busy love."

The action of the story is now essentially over, but at this point the perspective, after flickering around her for awhile, moves to Edith. Sabitha has moved away, leaving her behind to worry about what will happen if anyone discovers that they wrote the letters. Soon she learns that Johanna and Ken Boudreau have not only gotten married but have also had a child. And now her fear of being found out transmutes into something larger: the fear of what she has wrought. Munro may seem to tip her hand a little too baldly in the story's final scene: Edith learns of the baby's existence as she is doing her Latin homework, puzzling over Horace's line *Tu ne quaesieris, scire nefas, quem mihi, quem tibi finem di dederint*, "You must not ask, it is forbidden to us to know what fate has in store for me, or for you." And yet this stroke is not so broad as it appears. For the story is not really about the workings of fate, but about the power, and the powerlessness, of the writer. Edith, smart and "old for her age," is the one who originally hatches the idea of writing the letters. And she is able to perfectly imitate Ken Boudreau's voice, as well as to pitch the letters at just the right tone to seduce Johanna. But then Sabitha goes away on vacation with her rich cousins, and she comes back with new expressions, a new hairstyle, newly developed breasts. Suddenly the letters are the only hold Edith has over her friend. This is Edith's first discovery of the power of the written word—followed quickly by her surprise at its effects.

But the writer's fundamental paradox—possessing some ability to shape life, but only to a certain extent—has been in the background all along. The "Hateship, Friendship . . ." ritual from which the story takes its name is a child's game, a variation on the age-old "he loves me, he loves me not," and in the context of the story it can be accepted metaphorically. You write your full name on a piece of paper, and next to it the name of the boy you have a crush on. Then you cross out the letters that the two names have in common, and with the jumble that remains you count through the words "hateship, friendship,

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courtship, loveship, marriage." The one on which you end up is "the verdict on what could happen between you and that boy." To play the game, you must write the names down. But once they are on the piece of paper, chance takes over. Thus the game mimics the act of writing fiction: the writer presides over her created world, doling out blessings and judgments as she desires. But as soon as they leave her hand, her words—be they stories, poems, letters—take on a life of their own, which she cannot govern.

THOUGH THE "HATESHIP" story has much thematically in common with Munro's other stories about writing, in another way it is an oddity—in this book and in Munro's work in general. It ends happily, with a marriage and a baby, despite Munro's demonstrations elsewhere that the greatest purpose marriage has in a woman's life is to limit it. Throughout her work, the various bits and pieces of domesticity recur as a feminine variation of the proverbial ball and chain, and *Hateship* is no exception. Here is a typical passage, from "Post and Beam," in which Lorna, who has a crush on her husband's student Lionel, is mortified by the trappings of her wifehood. Although these lines ostensibly depict Lionel's reaction to Lorna's family life, we see him through Lorna's eyes, as the last sentence makes clear:

> The slight intrusions of domestic life—the cry of the baby reaching them through an open window, the scolding Brendan sometimes had to give Lorna about toys left lying about on the grass, instead of being put back in the sandbox, the call from the kitchen asking if she had remembered to buy limes for the gin and tonic—all seemed to cause a shiver, a tightening of Lionel's tall, narrow body and intent, distrustful face.... Once he sang very softly, to the tune of "O Tannenbaum," "*O married life, o married life.*" He smiled slightly, or Lorna thought he did, in the dark.

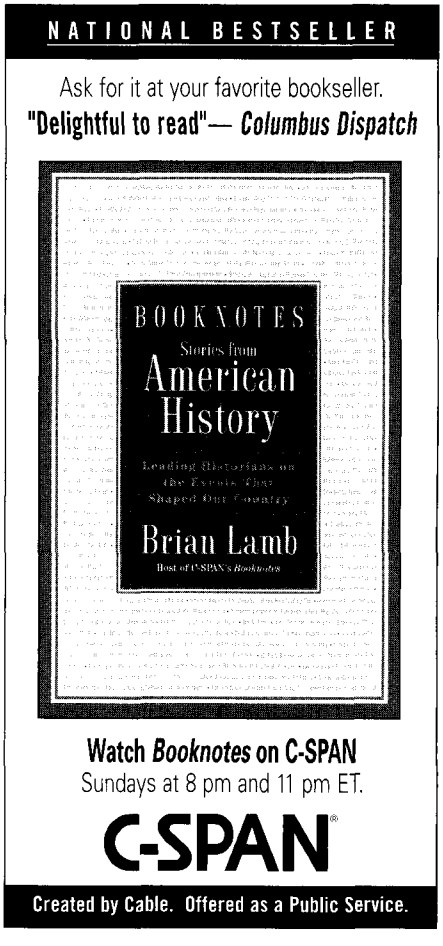
Worse than the banality of toys and sandboxes, marriage can be the source of true cruelty—and this cruelty, too, is met with the same resignation that we have already seen. The title character of "Queenie" has run away from home at the age of eighteen with the much older Mr. Vorguilla, who soon turns abusive. At one point he refuses to speak to her for days when he suspects her of having given a cake that she cannot locate to another man. Though the cake finally turns up, Queenie refuses to avenge herself, to the consternation of Chrissy, who protests, "But he was wrong." "Well, of course he was *wrong*," Queenie replies. "Men are not *normal*, Chrissy. That's one thing you'll learn if you ever get married." In fact women do not even have to be married to understand the sacrifices of power and of dignity that it requires. In "Family Furnishings," the spinster Alfrida comments that the narrator, her cousin, will soon be a married woman: "By her tone, this could mean either 'I have to allow that you're grown up now' or 'Pretty soon you'll have to toe the line.'"

But no woman can toe the line forever. If Munro's book has an overriding theme, it is infidelity: seven of the nine stories involve romantic encounters, or fantasies of them, that occur outside marriage. The majority of the encounters go no further than a kiss (the only story that includes an actual sexual act is the weakest in the book). What matters is not the act itself, but the freedom—the rejection of resignation—that it represents. Jinny, who has just learned that her cancer is in remission, celebrates the news by kissing a much younger boy while her husband visits with his parents. She literally has just met him, and she expects nothing more from him; the kiss is a pure moment of joy, a stepping outside of her ordinary life. When Lionel leaves for vacation, Lorna persuades his landlady to let her into his apartment. While her children call to her from outside, she enjoys the wonderment of inhabiting his space for the first time: "What she really wanted to do was ... to sit for hours not so much looking at this room as sinking into it. To stay in this room where there was nobody who knew her or wanted a thing from her. To stay here for a long, long time, growing sharper and lighter, light as a needle." Lorna has become so submissive in her marriage that even her escape fantasy is fundamentally passive. But it still represents a moment of transcending her resignation, of imagining a way out, even if it is only imaginary.

THESE VISIONS OF happiness are beautiful, but they are also repetitive. Versions of this epiphanic moment appear in at least five stories in this book. Munro is most successful when she abandons the pattern, as she does in the last story, "The Bear Came Over the Mountain," which examines an unconventional infidelity that occurs within a long and loving marriage. Fiona has begun to show the signs of Alzheimer's, requiring labels on each drawer to remind her of the contents and getting lost on her way home from the supermarket, and her husband Grant must put her in a nursing home. Grant, a college professor, once did his share of middle-aged philandering, which resulted in a minor scandal when a student with whom he had been involved threatened to commit suicide. But the incident ended tidily, Fiona never found out the whole story, and Grant is glad that those days are behind him.

When Grant first visits Fiona—the nursing home requires him to wait a month—he discovers that she and Aubrey, another resident, have become a couple. Aubrey demands that Fiona help him with the cards while he plays bridge, and Fiona seems to have forgotten about Grant entirely. But Aubrey is only in the institution temporarily, and when his wife takes him home Fiona becomes distraught. She refuses to eat, and her health declines. The only solution Grant can see is to bring Aubrey back to her, even just for a visit, and he must persuade Aubrey's wife to do so.

Munro's style is largely invisible in its economy. She constructs her stories out of long strings of detailed observations, each of them exactly right. Sometimes the shortest sentence is enough, as in this description of the behavior of Lionel's co-workers: "Everybody munched on secret eats and never shared." Or the narrator of "Nettles," describing the efforts she must make for her new lover after having left her husband: "We exchanged news—I made sure I had news." In "Hateship," the railway clerk, assessing



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Johanna's appearance, comments that "her teeth were crowded to the front of her mouth as if they were ready for an argument." Edith's mother appears in exactly one scene and yet gets one of the deftest lines in the book: "Since her own operation—for gallstones—she spoke knowledgeably and with a placid satisfaction about the afflictions of other people."

In "The Bear Came Over the Mountain," Munro uses this technique powerfully to evoke the world of the nursing home, the center of Grant and Fiona's lives, starting with the mundane cruelty of its institutional routine: "New residents were not to be visited during the first thirty days. Most people needed that time to get settled in. Before the rule had been put in place, there had been pleas and tears and tantrums, even from those who had come in willingly." Even secondary characters seem to emerge from her head fully formed, such as Kristy, the attendant, "a heavy young woman who looked as if she had given up in every department except her hair. That was blond and voluminous. All the puffed-up luxury of a cocktail waitress's style, or a stripper's, on top of such a workaday face and body." Though the building is freshly painted and appointed with modern electronics, the reading room contains only "old novels about chaste love, and lost-and-regained fortunes, that could have been the discards of some long-ago village or Sunday school library." There is also a fountain, and Grant finds himself wondering if coins have been glued to its tiles as "another feature of the building's encouraging decoration," since he has never actually seen anyone make a wish.

Writers who concentrate so fiercely on particulars can run the risk of sounding too shrewd, too gratified by their own tricks of verisimilitude. But Munro is never knowing for the sake of being knowing, in the manner of Jonathan Franzen in *The Corrections* with his corporate gardens. Though the reading room's old novels and the attendant's puffy hair are clearly meant to provoke a grin of amused recognition, she is too sympathetic to her characters to be sarcastic only for the purpose of sarcasm. Each of her details is part of the fully realized portrait of the nursing home microcosmos, and each one also has a meaning that extends beyond mere adornment. Grant's thoughts about Kristy's hair, blond and voluminous—those sentences are in his voice—serves to characterize his impression of her, as well as his attitude toward certain women in general; but they are also a reminder of the loss of Fiona, whose hair, "light as milkweed fluff," has "gone from pale blond to white somehow without Grant's noticing exactly when." Those old novels about chaste love suddenly seem an ironic commentary on Fiona's relationship with Aubrey, which even in its chastity has all the infinite pain of any betrayal; and Grant, after nearly losing Fiona in the episode with the student, regained her only to lose her again to Aubrey. And how bitter is Grant's comment on the coins, especially since both the building's inhabitants and its visitors have so much to wish for, and so little chance of having their wishes granted.

I HOPE THAT this will not be true, but there is an elegiac mood to this book that makes it feel as if it might be Munro's last. Her characters have tended to age along with her—she is now seventy—and *Hateship* is markedly focused on the pains and the desires of the elderly. Moreover, several of the stories read as answers to stories that Munro has written before, particularly "Family Furnishings," one of the book's few first-person narratives. Many of its elements, some of them likely autobiographical, have frequently appeared in stories past: the slightly comical spinster, the rural childhood, the narrator's engagement to a man of a higher class than she, the embarrassments of relatives, the responses of loved ones to one's writing. Here Munro synthesizes them all in the space of thirty-three pages, finally coming back to rest on the most fundamental question of all: the purpose of her art, the justification for it.

"Family Furnishings" begins with a demonstration of the deception that writing makes possible. Alfrida, the narrator's plainspoken, unmarried older cousin, writes in a flowery style about china and beauty treatments for the weddings column, and gives advice under the name Flora Simpson on the "Flora Simpson Housewives' Page." But Alfrida bears no resemblance to "the plump woman with the crimped gray hair and the forgiving smile who was pictured at the top of the page": a "career girl" and a "city person," she talks about politics and smokes cigarettes, which she calls "ciggie-boos." The narrator is fascinated by her, especially in contrast to her parents' other relatives, who talk only of diseases and debts. At one meal, she mimics a comment that her uncle has made:

> "Looks like the roundworms have got into the hogs," I said. "Yup."
>
> Except for the "yup," this was just what my uncle had said, and he had said it at this very table, being overcome by an uncharacteristic need to break the silence or to pass on something important that had just come to mind. And I said it with just his stately grunts, his innocent solemnity.
>
> Alfrida gave a great, approving laugh, showing her festive teeth. "That's it, she's got him to a *T*."
>
> My father bent over his plate, as if to hide how he was laughing too, but of course not really hiding it, and my mother shook her head, biting her lips, smiling. I felt a keen triumph. Nothing was said to put me in my place, no reproof for what was sometimes called my sarcasm, my being smart. The word "smart" when it was used about me, in the family, might mean intelligent, and then it was used rather grudgingly . . . or it might be used to mean pushy, attention-seeking, obnoxious. *Don't be so smart.*

The narrator wins a scholarship to go to college in the city where Alfrida lives, but she avoids her for as long as possible. The days when people could tell her to hide her brains are over, and she wants no reminders of her background, especially after she becomes engaged to marry a man who is much wealthier. She and Alfrida have one awkward meal together, at which Alfrida tells her the story of her mother's death—she died when a lamp exploded in her hands. And then the narrator has an epiphany: "It was as if a trap had snapped shut, to hold these words in my head. I did not exactly understand what use I would have for them. I only knew how they jolted me and released me, right away, to breathe a different kind of air, available only to myself." Years later she learns from her father that Alfrida was upset by the story she wrote based on this incident, and that a rift has developed between them because of it. And at her father's funeral, she meets Alfrida's illegitimate daughter, given up for adoption at birth, who exacts revenge: "You want to know what Alfrida said about you? . . . She said you were smart, but you weren't ever quite as smart as you thought you were."

But the story circles back to end with the narrator's epiphany. She is drinking a cup of coffee in a diner after her lunch with Alfrida. It is Sunday, and she has the day to herself.

> Such happiness, to be alone. To see the hot late-afternoon light on the sidewalk outside, the branches of a tree just out in leaf, throwing their skimpy shadows. To hear from the back of the shop the sounds of the ball game that the man who had served me was listening to on the radio. I did not think of the story I would make about Alfrida—not of that in particular—but of the work I wanted to do, which seemed more like grabbing something out of the air than constructing stories. The cries of the crowd came to me like big heartbeats, full of sorrows. Lovely

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formal-sounding waves, with their distant, almost inhuman assent and lamentation.

This was what I wanted, this was what I thought I had to pay attention to, this was how I wanted my life to be.

With the Munro heroine's usual hesitation, the narrator first claims that she did not know what use she would have for Alfrida's story. And yet by the end of the afternoon she comes out with the artistic credo for which we have been waiting. "More like grabbing something out of the air than constructing stories"—we are back with the teenaged Munro, looking out the window at the horses on the scale, at the image that reveals the story that falls into place around it. And here it is not something to be fit in between diaper changes, but "the work I wanted to do." The short story has been chosen after all. ■

Rights of Passage

By CASS R. SUNSTEIN

A World Made New: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by Mary Ann Glendon

(Random House, 333 pp., $25.95)

ARE RIGHTS UNIVERSAL? Can diverse people, across religious and ethnic differences, agree about what rights people have? Might it be possible to produce agreements about the content of rights among people from different nations—not simply England, America, Germany, and France, but China, Russia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, India, Iran, Kenya, Egypt, Uganda, Cuba, and Japan, too? What would such an agreement look like? What rights would it recognize?

It is tempting to say that if people are going to accept a certain catalogue of rights, then they must think first about what rights are, and about why rights exist in the first place. They might ask whether rights come from God or from nature, or stem from an understanding of what makes human lives good, or are instruments for promoting social welfare. But people from different traditions and nations will have a lot of difficulty in agreeing on issues of this kind. This was in fact the experience of those who attempted to design the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, written and adopted by the United Nations in the aftermath of World War II. Consider the views of Jacques Maritain, a philosopher who participated in some of the deliberations that led to the Declaration. Responding to public astonishment that people of radically opposed views had agreed on rights, Maritain liked to say: "Yes, we agree about the rights, but on condition that no one asks us why." According to Maritain, the only feasible goal was to produce agreement "not on the basis of common speculative ideas, but on common practical ideas, not on the affirmation of one and the same conception of the world, of man, and of knowledge, but upon the affirmation of a single body of beliefs for guidance on action."

Mary Ann Glendon has written an illuminating and unexpectedly timely book about the Declaration. Glendon believes that the Declaration produced a genuinely new understanding of rights, stemming from its drafters' belief in the crucial interdependence of the newer social and economic rights (social security, food, clothing, housing, and medical care) and the older protections against government intrusion (free speech, religious liberty, freedom from torture and abuse of the criminal justice system). The newer rights were championed above all by the Soviet bloc, but Franklin Delano Roosevelt had supported them, too, in 1944, when he called for a "Second Bill of Rights"; and the United States endorsed their presence in the Declaration.

Glendon acknowledges that by itself the Declaration is only that: a declaration, mere words, an unenforceable text—without the binding effect of international law. And yet she believes that it has proved exceptionally important in practice, helping to inspire dissidents and activists all over the world, and actually producing language that has been used verbatim in new constitutions, especially in Eastern Europe. She also believes that the Declaration may be especially useful as a foundation for similar charters of newly free societies across the globe, because it shrewdly combines agnosticism on certain unresolvable issues with an elaborate set of protections for both individuals and groups.

Glendon's discussion comes in three parts. The first and by far the longest is a sustained narrative account of the writing and the adoption of the Declaration. The story that she tells deserves to be widely known. The book's second part is a brief analysis of the rights recognized by the Declaration—rights that are instructively and greatly different from the rights to which Americans have become accustomed. The third part deals with the subsequent history of the Declaration, including its large role in constitution-making in the late twentieth century and the increasingly intense objections that it has produced from those who maintain that it is irredeemably Western. Let us begin with her historical narrative.

IN THE AFTERMATH of World War II, and after the death of Roosevelt, the young United Nations embarked on the project of cataloguing a set of universal human rights. Of course the Nazi experience loomed large, but the people behind the project wanted to produce a document that outran the particular circumstances. By far the most prominent and controversial American delegate was Eleanor Roosevelt, who had been appointed by President Truman. She was reluctant to accept the job: "How could I be a delegate to help organize the United Nations when I have no background or experience in international meetings?" Yet she was unanimously elected as chairman of the U.N. Human Rights Commission, established in June 1946 with the initial goal of producing of a bill of human rights. The commissioners included representatives from eighteen nations, including Australia, Belgium, Chile, Cuba, China, Egypt, India, Iran, Lebanon, Panama, the United States, Uruguay, and Yugoslavia. P.C. Chang, head of the Chinese delegation at the United Nations, was selected as vice-chairman. Charles Malik of Lebanon was chosen as secretary, with the responsibility of producing official reports on the work of the commission. Roosevelt, Chang, and Malik were to become central figures in a long drama.

As Glendon describes them, the initial meetings of the commission were rocky and unpromising. A hotly disputed issue involved implementation: who would enforce a bill of rights? Hansa Mehta of India, among others, argued that such a bill would be meaningless without an enforcement mechanism. Roosevelt responded with the American approach,

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which combined enthusiasm for a statement of basic principles with skepticism about enforcement. (As we will see, the American position in this count has remained consistent over the last fifty years and more.)

But the debates over philosophical issues were even more heated. Chang supported a substantive preamble, establishing a basic principle "with a view to elevating the concept of man's dignity." At this stage things started to break down. Malik urged that the topic of human rights raised "the fundamental question, what is man?" Disagreements about human rights, according to Malik, reflected disagreements over the questions: "Is man merely a social being? Is he merely an animal? Is he merely an economic being?"

This was not a helpful beginning. Yugoslavia's delegate offered some Soviet-style platitudes, insisting that liberty required "perfect harmony between the individual and the community" and that "a modern declaration of rights should not only consider the rights favored by the ruling classes." In his view, "the social principle comes first." Malik vehemently disagreed, urging that the "deepest danger of the age" involves the extinction of individuality. He argued that the commission should agree that "the human being is more important than any national or cultural group to which he may belong" and that "a person's mind and conscience are his most sacred and inviolable possessions." The Soviet representative predictably demurred.

IT BECAME CLEAR that a written document could not be produced by the full commission, which therefore assigned to just four delegates (Roosevelt, Chang, Malik, and the Canadian John Humphrey) the job of producing a "preliminary draft" of an international bill of rights. Humphrey was asked to draw up an initial version. By the time of the next meeting four months later, Humphrey and his staff had accomplished their task.

Having consulted a wide range of ideas and traditions, they were especially influenced by the "Statement of Essential Human Rights" that was produced in 1944 by the American Law Institute, and by the draft of the Pan-American Declaration, which was then under consideration in Latin America. Humphrey's unruly, heterogeneous document was really just a list, including no fewer than forty-eight items meant to capture the common core of the documents and the proposals consulted by his staff. Despite its lack of organization, Glendon thinks that the result was an impressive "distillation of nearly two hundred years of efforts to articulate the most basic human values in terms of rights."

The distillation included and affirmed the political and civil rights familiar within the Anglo-American and French traditions, such as freedom of speech, religion, movement, and assembly, and protection of life, liberty, and property. These are typically described as "first generation" rights. But Humphrey's draft also included the "second generation" economic and social rights found in the constitutions of the Soviet Union, Norway, and some Latin American countries, including the right to work, to education, and to basic subsistence.

THE DRAFT MET with a mixed reaction within the commission. The delegate from the United Kingdom objected that second-generation rights could not possibly be enforced. Making a point that he would repeat over and over again, the Soviet delegate complained that certain rights—including the right to freedom of movement—were a threat to national sovereignty. In the midst of these and other disagreements, it was suggested that a revision, if possible agreeable to all sides, should be produced by René Cassin, the French delegate and a distinguished jurist who had a great deal of experience in the drafting of legislation. In Glendon's account, Cassin's draft amounted to the core of the document that was eventually approved.

Cassin "preserved most of the substantive content of Humphrey's draft, but under his hand the document acquired an internal logic and achieved greater unity," separating various rights into intelligible categories and offering a sense of their mutual dependence. Glendon describes Cassin's achievement this way: "By fusing rights from an older tradition of political and civil liberty to those reflecting a more modern preoccupation with social and economic need, by providing both sets of rights with an interpretive framework, and by declaring that all these rights belonged to everyone, everywhere, the Declaration was bringing something new into the world." Cassin also produced a new preamble and provided six general principles to guide interpretation of specific provisions. Of special importance was his attempt to produce "a formula that did not require the Commission to take sides on the nature of man and society, or to become [immersed] in metaphysical controversies."

At the same time, deliberations were occurring within the philosophers' Committee on the Theoretical Bases of Human Rights (those were the days!) of the U.N.'s Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The philosophers' committee was moving in exactly the same direction as the Human Rights Commission, toward a catalogue of rights unaccompanied by any inquiry into "theoretical bases." A questionnaire about the nature and the content of human rights had been sent to people with American, European, Islamic, Hindu, Buddhist, and other perspectives; and many of the most famous contemporary philosophers, statesmen, and theologians were consulted. Non-Western respondents urged that while the term "rights" was not part of their tradition, something close to the basic idea was hardly unfamiliar. An Indian political scientist contended that Hindu thinkers had "propounded a code, as it were, of ten essential freedoms and controls or virtues necessary for good life." In the words of a Confucian philosopher, the "idea of human rights developed very early in China." Another philosopher said early Islam had "succeeded in overcoming distinctions of race and colour to an extent experienced neither before nor since"; and he complained that the flaw in the Western conception of rights lay only in the fact that it was an aspiration rather than a reality.

Of course, there were significant cultural differences. Asian respondents emphasized the need to include duties, and not merely rights, in any universal declaration. The "basic ethical concept of Chinese social political relations is the fulfillment of the duty to one's neighbor, rather than the claiming of rights." Mohandas K. Gandhi wrote: "I learned from my illiterate but wise mother that all rights to be deserved and preserved came from duty well done. Thus the very right to live accrues to us only when we do the duty of citizenship of the world." And several Europeans agreed on the importance of emphasizing duties as well as rights.

ALL THESE DISAGREEMENTS notwithstanding, Glendon finds that the surveys "indicated that the principles underlying the draft Declaration were present in many cultural and religious traditions, though not always expressed in terms of rights." The list of shared norms comprised first-generation rights and second-generation rights, including the right to self-expression, the right to fair procedures, the right to freedom of speech and worship, and also the right to work, the right to social assistance in cases of need, and the right to protection of health. Thus the philosophers found "common convictions" that were supported by "divergent political and economic systems" and "different philosophic principles."

With the general support of the philosophers' committee, Cassin's draft was presented at the commission's next meeting. Again a central debate involved issues

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of implementation. Many nations, including France, Lebanon, and Cuba, argued that the Declaration would be meaningless without some kind of international human rights court or monitoring agency. But an unusual alliance emerged: the world's two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, sought to block any commitment to an enforcement mechanism. The obvious reason was that both nations feared that such a mechanism would produce embarrassment and potentially worse—what Soviet and Yugoslav representatives described as "a kind of world government, placed above national sovereignty."

The substance of Cassin's draft was engaged along several dimensions. Inspired perhaps by Thomas Jefferson's own Declaration, Malik proposed that the first article should say that people are "endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights." Cassin responded that a reference to God would subvert the document's universality. Mehta disliked the draft's suggestion that "all men" should enjoy the relevant rights; she thought that this terminology would exclude women. Roosevelt disagreed, saying that "all men" would include everyone.

The most intense arguments involved the social and economic rights, now including the right to work, to education, to rest and leisure, to an adequate standard of living, and to security in unemployment and old age. The United Kingdom opposed any such list. But, again, Franklin Delano Roosevelt himself had proposed a "Second Bill of Rights" of just this kind; and on America's behalf his widow endorsed the basic idea, urging that "men in need were not free men." For its part, the Soviet Union objected to "any language that would appear to relegate social and economic rights to an inferior rank." After sustained debate, the conflict between skeptics and enthusiasts was essentially resolved through a new provision saying that social and economic rights would be implemented "in accordance with the organization and resources of each State."

THE WORK OF the Human Rights Commission came before the United Nations in the fall of 1948. The Soviet representative, sounding like a broken record, re-launched his general objection, emphasizing the importance of national sovereignty. The discussion of particular provisions turned out to be hilariously tedious, a parody of the United Nations to come. Early on, Canada's Humphrey wrote to his sister: "I have heard so many of these speeches that it is only in revolt that I can hope to find sanity. We have been on this thing for three weeks now and have adopted two out of the twenty-eight articles." The Brazilian delegation wanted to add that "all human beings are created in the image and likeness of God." Others wanted to say that human beings have certain rights "by nature." Chang succeeded in urging that neither "nature" nor "God" should be mentioned in explicit terms. South Africa objected to Article 2, which said (and says) that everyone "is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race...." The Soviet delegate sought a ban on the death penalty.

Saudi Arabia objected to several rights: to change one's religion, to enter into marriage "only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses," and to "equal rights both during marriage and at its dissolution." Sounding weirdly like Edmund Burke, the Saudi representative claimed that the Western standards "had ignored more ancient civilizations, which were past the experimental stage, and the institutions of which, for example marriage, had proved their wisdom through the centuries." It is notable, though, that the Muslim nations were not in agreement on this question. The delegates from Pakistan and Egypt were willing to accept the idea of "equal rights" to marriage; and Egypt (and also India) supported the right to change one's religion.

While the delegates supported the general idea of social and economic rights, intense disagreement continued over the details. The representatives of liberal democracies wanted to keep the provisions vague and flexible, whereas other delegates, especially from Communist nations, wanted more specificity and a clear statement of the government's affirmative role. A typical debate involved the right to work. The Soviets sought a provision expressly protecting against unemployment and providing a clear right to equal pay for equal work; Cuba proposed a right to a level of pay suitable for workers and their families. The United States opposed these changes, but they were adopted by large majorities.

With modest alterations, the resulting document was ready for adoption by the General Assembly. Introducing the Declaration, Malik emphasized that this was a genuinely global product, urging that each nation could identify places in the Declaration "where it could either find its own contributions or the influence of the culture to which it belonged." While India "played a key role in advancing the antidiscrimination principle, especially with regard to women," political and civil liberties owed a great deal to the work of the United States and the United Kingdom, and the social and economic rights were greatly influenced by the Soviet Union. Thus the Declaration had been produced on a "firm international basis wherein no regional philosophy or way of life was permitted to prevail." Ultimately the Declaration was approved with forty-eight positive votes, no negative votes, and eight abstentions (mostly Soviet bloc nations, invoking the theme of national sovereignty, but also South Africa and Saudi Arabia, breaking from the general approval of the Muslim nations).

GLENDON OFFERS AN overview of the Declaration in its final form. It seems to be organized into four parts or (in Cassin's term) "columns." The first part creates a set of familiar Anglo-American rights, including bans on slavery, torture, and cruel, inhuman, or degrading punishment; the right to be free from arbitrary arrest, detention, or exile; the right to life, liberty, and security. The second and more original part describes rights to enter into, to maintain, and to leave relationships with both governments and persons. People are given the rights to freedom of movement within states, to leave states, to seek asylum from persecution, to marry and to found a family, to own property, and to be free from arbitrary interference with family, home, correspondence, and privacy. The third part protects the classic political rights (freedom of opinion, expression, and association) alongside the right to freedom of religion (expressly including the freedom to change religion).

The fourth "column" comprises a breathtaking catalogue of social and economic rights. Everyone is given not only the right to social security, but also the right to work, to just and favorable conditions of work, to protection against unemployment, to rest and to leisure, to equal pay for equal work, to just and favorable remuneration ensuring an existence worthy of human dignity, to education, and to an adequate standard of living, including food, clothing, housing, medical care, and necessary social services. The Declaration concludes with several provisions intended to cast light on the document in general. Thus people are given the right "to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms" in the Declaration "can be fully realized." Echoing the point made most emphatically by Asian participants, it is also said that everyone "has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible."

This, to say the least, is an ambitious set of rights. But what has happened to the Declaration over the past fifty years? In many nations, including those that agreed to it, it seems to have had little or no impact. Glendon emphasizes that within

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the United States, criticism was initially widespread, with the president of the American Bar Association describing the document as a "pink paper" whose adoption "would promote state socialism, if not communism, throughout the world." Owing to reactions such as these, the prospects were not good for American ratification of an international covenant, which would be necessary to make the Declaration, by itself purely hortatory, binding and a genuine part of international law. It seemed clear that at most the Senate would approve only of a covenant on political and civil rights. With this point in mind, Roosevelt participated in a successful movement to draw up two separate covenants—one involving political and civil rights, the other economic, social, and cultural rights. Glendon thinks that the separation was a practical necessity, but she laments the division, and believes, with Cassin and others, that the rights recognized by the Declaration are genuinely interdependent.

In any event, the Declaration proved a lot more appealing than the covenants. It was not until 1976 that the covenants received the number of ratifications that would enable them to go into effect at all. As far as the United States is concerned, the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights was not ratified until 1992 (and even then with reservations that remove almost all of its domestic force). And we still have not ratified the Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. Though they are technically binding, the covenants themselves are notoriously hard to enforce. In an unanticipated and relatively recent development, parts of the Declaration are now counted in some circles as "customary international law," which means that they may even be directly enforceable; but there has been only little success in enforcing any of the Declaration as such.

STILL, GLENDON THINKS that the Declaration has had a significant impact—and in some ways a growing impact—on the world. Martin Luther King Jr. prominently endorsed the Declaration in accepting the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. The Helsinki Accords of 1975 included a pledge, signed by the Soviet Union itself, to "to act in conformity" with the Declaration; and the Helsinki Accords helped to inspire dissidents under communism. Noting that external monitoring groups have often invoked the Declaration to challenge rights violations, Glendon thinks that Eleanor Roosevelt was largely right to have confidence in the educational function of the Declaration: "The most impressive advances in human rights—the fall of apartheid in South Africa and the collapse of the Eastern European totalitarian regimes—owe more to the moral beacon of the Declaration than to the many covenants and treaties that are now in force." In addition, the Declaration has served as a source text for an astonishingly wide range of legally enforceable documents, including more than ninety constitutions. Indeed, almost all of the constitutions written in the aftermath of communism were influenced by the Declaration, sometimes copying provisions verbatim.

Glendon is aware that there have been sharp objections to the Declaration from those who see it as unacceptably Western, even as an act of cultural imperialism. Critics have complained of the Declaration's claims to universalism—urging, in the words of a recent critic, that "Muslims, Hindus, non-Judeo-Christians, feminists, critical theorists, and other scholars of an inquiring bent might have exposed the Declaration's bias and exclusivity." Glendon offers four responses to these criticisms. First, a significant range of nations did participate in the framing of the Declaration, with major influences coming from China, India, and Lebanon. Second, the Declaration emphatically allows for local variations; it offers general ideas whose concrete realization, it was and is agreed, could be variable. Third, the origin of the idea of human rights has nothing to do with its merit: "Shouldn't the question be whether the idea is a good one rather than who had the idea first? Whether the idea is conducive to human flourishing rather than where it was born?" Fourth, and finally, Glendon insists that "where basic human values are concerned, cultural diversity has been exaggerated." Here she invokes the UNESCO philosophers, who "found, after consulting with Confucian, Hindu, Muslim, and European thinkers," that a set of fundamental rights commitments "was widely shared in countries that had not yet adopted rights instruments and that had not yet embraced the language of rights." Glendon concludes with a plea for an increased international role for the Declaration, urging that "its transformative potential has barely begun to be realized."

THE FRAMING AND the adoption of the Declaration make a terrific story, and Glendon tells it well. In the process she provides two broader lessons. The first is that diverse people can often agree on particular practices even when they disagree on more general questions. Indeed, both social life and law itself are often made possible by agreements of just this kind. Sometimes we do best to bracket our theoretical disagreements and to see whether we might agree not on what to think but on what to do. The Endangered Species Act, for example, enjoys broad support within the United States, but the support rests on diverse grounds, with some emphasizing religious values, others thinking that rare species can provide material benefits to human beings, and still others urging that species as such have rights.

Even judges—one of whose jobs is to give reasons—tend to avoid the most contentious theoretical debates, not least in resolving disputes about rights. When abstract disagreements seem impossible to bridge, judges—in America, Germany, India, Israel, and South Africa—often descend to a lower level of abstraction. They rule, for example, that political dissent cannot be suppressed without showing a clear and present danger, without resolving the question of whether the free speech principle is rooted in a commitment to the marketplace of ideas, or a principle of individual autonomy, or a commitment to democratic self-government, or something else.

Glendon's second lesson involves the claim that rights are unacceptably Western. She is right to emphasize that rights of one sort or another have analogues in many traditions, religions, and nations. It does not much matter whether the term "rights" itself is used; shared norms, protecting certain interests, can do the work of rights. And even if certain ideas have their origins in the Western tradition, it remains necessary to say what exactly is wrong with endorsing values that have sources in that tradition. Glendon quotes a Chinese dissident named Xiao Quiang: "If you were to voice dissent from the prevailing view in China, you would end up in jail, and there you would soon be asking for your rights, without worrying about whether they were 'American' or 'Chinese.'"

BUT GLENDON SAYS too little about the palpable fact that many millions of people, all over the globe, lack much enthusiasm for the Declaration or for the rights that it contains. In fact, many religious leaders, and many public officials, are quite skeptical of some of the relevant rights. Like the UNESCO philosophers, Glendon writes as if multiple traditions, religious and otherwise, really do converge on a certain understanding of rights—as if diverse people, from their different starting points, are able to agree on a certain catalogue. This is not entirely wrong; but it is far too simple. The Christian, Jewish, and Islamic religions—to name just three—are full of discriminatory, exclusionary, and even violent strands. Do all of these clearly forbid mistreatment of people because

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of their religious beliefs? Give men and women "equal rights as to marriage, during marriage, and at its dissolution"? Recognize a right not to be arbitrarily deprived of property? Allow people to leave their religion or their nation? Permit people to enter into marriage "only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses"? The answer is not no, but it is not exactly yes.

Those who agreed to the Declaration were not simply following their traditions; they were also interpreting and evaluating them, emphasizing certain features while repudiating and suppressing others. They were also involved in a complicated process of bargaining. It is reasonable to suppose that the Declaration, in its final form, was a compromise, not representing the first choice of any of those who accepted it. Probably few nations were enthusiastic about the whole list.

What Glendon really describes is a process in which diverse people, from their own starting points, were able to agree that this system of rights was a good enough one. This is important, to be sure. But what Glendon does not sufficiently emphasize is the deep ambivalence—and, in a way, the hypocrisy—of this very consensus, as evidenced by the continuing difficulty in achieving agreement on an enforcement mechanism. It is relatively easy both for individuals and for states to agree to principles in the abstract. But it is a lot harder to take steps to make the agreement meaningful in the world. Many of the states that accepted the Declaration violate it every day. Note, in this regard, the fact that the constitution of the former Soviet Union was extremely impressive and not so very different from the Declaration, containing strong guarantees of both first-generation and second-generation rights. The Soviet constitution, like many others (including contemporary China's), was not worth the paper on which it was written. The Declaration has had a greater effect; but is it altogether different?

This question raises a related puzzle, involving the kind of document that the Declaration is meant to be, or the sort of process that it is meant to initiate. Is the Declaration a set of social aspirations, a kind of moral beacon, or is it meant to create genuine obligations? Well over eighty percent of the world's nations have now ratified both covenants, but how many of the ratifiers comply with them in practice? Consider an analogy. In the aftermath of communism, many Eastern European nations embarked on the task of constitution-making, and the Declaration had an extraordinary influence on the documents that emerged. In the process, discussions between Americans and Eastern Europeans reflected a sharp cultural divide. Americans tended to think of constitutions as pragmatic instruments, with direct real-world consequences. They asked, "What will this provision do, in fact?" Eastern Europeans tended to think of constitutions as literally declarative—as expressive of a nation's deepest hopes and highest goals. They asked, "What values does this provision affirm, in principle?"

If we take the pragmatic approach, we will be likely to ask, as Glendon does not, whether all of the Declaration would be sensible parts of an enforceable constitution containing the important institution of judicial review. Should a constitution create a "right to just and favorable remuneration"? To "a standard of living adequate for the health and leisure of" one's family, "including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services"? To "rest and leisure"? What would these provisions mean, concretely, in a poor nation with high levels of unemployment and inadequate medical care and housing? What would they mean, concretely, in a wealthy nation such as the United States or France? If a nation failed to protect the relevant rights, would courts be authorized to intervene—as they often are when rights are violated?

Glendon wants to "reunite the sundered halves of the Declaration—its commitment to individual liberty and its acknowledgment of a link between freedom and economic opportunity." She is right to do so. But she does not explore the complex relationship between the project of "declaring" the rights that people possess and the very different enterprise of creating institutions. Of the many constitutions emerging from the last decades' extraordinary period of constitution-writing, the South African one is probably the most impressive; and it qualifies as such in large part because it separates, far more clearly than the Declaration, rights that can be enforced and rights that really are aspirations.

Glendon thinks that Eleanor Roosevelt was correct to argue for a catalogue of moral commitments and to expect that such a catalogue would have real effects, above all because of its pedagogical role. But the skeptic might urge that Roosevelt would have done better to argue for a set of commitments that was simultaneously less ambitious and more easily subject to monitoring and implementation. We lack the kind of careful empirical test that would justify the confident judgment that the skeptic is wrong.

And yet this objection should not be overstated. Glendon is able to show that the Declaration has influenced many recent developments, including the drafting of binding documents, domestic and international. And her most general claim, rooted in Maritain, can be extended. If an international consensus on basic rights will eventually prove possible, not only in a declaration but also in practice, it will probably be developed by bracketing the deepest disagreements and by seeking agreement on what should be done in fact, not on why it should be done in principle. We can go even further. Declaring people's rights is itself a tribute to principle, and actually protecting them is a greater tribute still. ■

CORRESPONDENCE

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"curiosity-driven") research more than pays for itself over a period of typically 30 years. The most famous example is nylon, the profits from which more than repaid the cost of the initial research, development, and commercialization. The development of the transistor as a result of basic research on electron transport in semiconductors is a more recent case in point. In other words, investment in basic research is not only safe and sound, but it is very rewarding. The trouble is, it takes time to reap the rewards.

Charles Kelber
Rockville, Maryland

Color guard

To the editors:

Peter Beinart's two TRB columns from South Africa were right on the mark ("Left Out," January 14; "Social Disease," January 21). That said, Beinart writes that in "1959, racialists formed the Pan-African Congress, which suggested that Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC) was being controlled by whites and Communists." A better example, though, would have been Mandela's own such suspicions about whites, which came much earlier. In 1945 Mandela himself put forth a motion to expel Communists from the ANC. Mandela's later support for the South African Communist Party (SACP) wasn't ideological but based on the mutual enemy of apartheid and, still later, on what he felt was a moral debt he owed as a result of the SACP's (and the USSR's) support. Few South African blacks ever took communism seriously, and it was clear to observers that when apartheid ended, the center of that alliance couldn't hold.

Todd Pitock
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NEW YORK DIARIST

Reckoning

IN A NOTE OF UNINTENDED irony and rebuke, Robert Skidelsky's third and final volume on the life and work of John Maynard Keynes, *Fighting for Britain: 1937-1946*, was released just as the Enron crisis was shoveling the 1990s into the grave where they deservedly belong. As we battle a recession at home and wage a campaign against terror abroad, the Keynesian worldview has fresh, new relevance. Regulation is back: In economics, as in politics, we have been brought down to Earth. As Gretchen Morgenson of *The New York Times* put it, "For years, the corporate fabulists were in charge. Now it is the realists' turn." The insight goes beyond corporate life: It takes in all the culture that was woven around the triumphalism and delirium of the 1990s.

THE WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM—THE emblematic expression of the 1990s—came to New York earlier this month and quickly went. It was a stunt, of course, by its founder Klaus Schwab, meant to erase all the giddy things the Davosians had said about the world before September 11. Clearly, the Davos bubble has burst. Its GLTs—Global Leaders for Tomorrow, for those far enough out of the loop to ask—pronounce on the world with less confidence, and the world does not hang on their utterances. Some Davos regulars were unusually reticent about their participation in the gabfest. They turned up (just in case) but put the word out that their heart was not in the affair, or they simply refrained from writing the triumphant dispatches of days gone by about the truths revealed to them at the conference. Not so, of course, the Davosians' standard-bearer, William Jefferson Clinton, who held forth, as is his habit ("The Globalization President," as he had been dubbed by one of the globalization magazines). But who is of a mood today to listen to Bill Clinton? So much of what he says is plain therapy and narcissism, the inability of a needy man to come to a reckoning with his life and legacy.

THE DAVOSIANS HAVE LITTLE TO SAY today to Grandma Jones in Duluth: They had taken her to the stock market, put her in equities, as the expression has it; they had sold her a vision of an economic model—the unregulated market, minimum government expenditure and oversight, technophoria, and all the incantations of globalization—and that vision has come crashing down. The "borderless world" that had enchanted the Davosians: What has become of it? The terrorists overwhelmed it, used it to their own destructive ends, and served a warrant on the illusions of the Western democracies and the globalizers. The "emerging markets" had once been another specialty; no one speaks of them anymore, either. As Argentina spun out of control and its economy melted down, the economic gurus who were once full of certitude, sure they knew the secrets of wealth creation, were nowhere to be found. (It fell to Clinton, fat with speaking fees from one corner of the world to the other, to say that he had "cried for Argentina"; the line was there, and the unserious man could not resist it.)

IN TRUTH, THE MASTERS OF DAVOS knew no more about the economic world than did Grandma Jones. The American economic hubris of the 1990s, we now know, has had its comeuppance, as a speculative economy that dispensed with the yardstick of profit and fair valuation was bound to do. We had held America's success like a rod over the heads of other nations; we could not see that our accounting practices were defective, that our corporate economy was shackled with debt (the corporate debt carried by the average American company is 150 percent of its book value), and that it was a only matter of time before a nemesis overtook all that delirium.

"[O]N WALL STREET, WE RARELY LOOK back," a wizard of The Street, Edward Yardeni of Deutsche Bank, observed after his prophecies of a Y2K crisis had failed to materialize, and after his clients had spent heavily on the threat and the breakdown that never came. Yardeni was right: Such is the way of the world. It's lucky for the GLTs and other sages that we can't nail them to the utterances and predictions they made. All had been well with the world, the globalizers tell us; then came September 11. But the order of things, political and economic, was out of joint on September 10 and September 9, and long before Enron and Global Crossing and the "e-tailors" vaporized. The road to September 11 had taken us through the abdication that followed the Khobar Towers bombing in Saudi Arabia in the summer of 1996, the attacks on our embassies in East Africa in the summer of 1998, and the brazen assault on the USS *Cole* in Aden in October 2000. The men of Al Qaeda had taken our measure. We brushed off our calamities and emboldened our enemies. That "borderless world" whose hymns we were singing was growing monstrous by the day, but we could not read or see its menace. September 11 had not issued out of a void. The very things we were celebrating—cybercafés, travel, mobility of money and people—were to be our undoing.

IN THE SAME VEIN, ONLY THE MOST servile and ahistorical sycophants of the Clinton era can place the Enron crisis solely at the doorstep of George W. Bush and Dick Cheney. Companies don't vaporize overnight nor over the course of a single year. It was not solely faulty accounting that doomed Enron. It was the economic culture—the mergers and acquisitions, the steady attacks on the regulatory state, the triumphalism that sent us around the world peddling the orthodoxy of Wall Street while leaving our economy unmonitored, trusting an understaffed Securities and Exchange Commission with tasks it could no longer perform. We couldn't examine and scrutinize our economy: We were on a roll, busy browbeating the French for their expensive social services, trumpeting the millions of new American investors who had jumped—and often borrowed their way—into the stock market. There had once been talk of the "millionaire next door." A fabulist of the 1990s, Dinesh D'Souza, upped the ante with a *Forbes* cover story, "The Billionaire Next Door." There was no need for economic literacy, or sobriety. Dow 36,000 (another prophecy in the junkyard of such prophecies) was on the way. It would make a J.P. Morgan of every investor, a Keynes of every pundit.

GRANT THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION the sobriety its leaders brought into our public life. They took what fate—and the blowback of the 1990s—brought their way and adjusted to it. The terror and the recession have given them their task. In national security, their seriousness is a break with the illusions of Clinton foreign policy. We are fortunate to have a president who names and recognizes evil states, and who does not think that the measure of a foreign nation's intent is the number of Internet users within its borders or the reception its leaders give the First Family on its junkets and sightseeing tours. In foreign policy, there is purpose. Even with a Republican president, Keynes is back. Deficits are now unavoidable. We have had our giddy season and, in the end, such seasons must be paid for.

FOUAD AJAMI

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The Legal Principle at Stake

The January 26 Cleveland Plain Dealer *published the following headline and editorial regarding the constitutionality of Cleveland's school voucher program.*

The choice question: High court must make its decision on legal principle, not on the basis of a phony mathematical argument.

The constitutionality of Ohio's school voucher program should not be judged by whether one or 100 religious schools participate. What matters is whether the Supreme Court deems any parochial school involvement acceptable.

It is hardly surprising that yet another analysis finds most Cleveland families with vouchers send their children to schools with religious affiliations. More than four of every five private schools nationwide are sectarian; besides, Ohio's charter school program - launched after the voucher initiative - makes far more financial sense for independent schools.

When the state's voucher program began in 1996, reports an Ohio think tank, a little more than three-quarters of participants sent their children to religious schools. Four years later, the figure exceeds 99 percent. Voucher opponents argue that the lopsided numbers show that Ohio's program promotes religion and thus violates the Constitution's establishment clause. Yet voucher supporters say the actual choice of schools rests with parents, and secular schools still are part of the program.

The number of truly independent voucher schools has fallen since the program began. That's largely because the state's charter program offers far larger per-student funding, which has prompted many independent voucher schools to convert to charter schools. Meanwhile, voucher advocates have sought stipend increases, but legislators are delaying that debate until the legal fights are over.

Parental School Choice is Widespread — Unless You're Poor.

That day will soon arrive. The Supreme Court [will] rule by mid-year.

But the issue of constitutionality should be settled on principle, not percentages. Thus the crucial question is: If parents, rather than the state, choose a child's school, does the program still violate the Constitution?

baeo

Black Alliance for Educational Options

For more information go to: www.schoolchoiceinfo.org or www.baeo.org

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At Fannie Mae, we're working to make the **American Dream** come true for not just some Americans, but for all Americans.

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